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The Last Look on Vaiśālī
वैशाली के अन्तिम दर्शन

चित्रकार श्री दिनेश बख्शी ।] [पुस्तक भंडार, लहेरियासराय के सौजन्य से ।

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Vaisali Sangha Publication

वैशाली-अभिनन्दन-ग्रन्थ

HOMAGE TO VAISALI

Editors

J. C. MATHUR, I.C.S.

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उपेन्द्र महारथी

प्रकाशक

वैशाली संघ

मु॰ पो॰ वैशाली, जिला–मुजफ्फरपुर (बिहार)

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Vaisali Sangha Publication

वैशाली-अभिनन्दन-ग्रन्थ

HOMAGE TO VAISALI

भूमिका–लेखक

डा० राजेन्द्र प्रसाद

सम्पादक

जगदीशचन्द्र माथुर, आई० सी० एस०

योगेन्द्र मिश्र, एम० ए०, साहित्यरत्न

(लेक्चरर, इतिहास विभाग, पटना कालेज)

कलाकार

उपेन्द्र महारथी

प्रकाशक

वैशाली संघ

मु० पो० वैशाली, जिला–मुजफ्फरपुर (बिहार)

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अप्रैल, १९४८
प्रथम संस्करण—१०००

मूल्य—बारह रुपये

मुद्रक—जीवन कृष्ण शर्मा, इलाहाबाद लॉ जर्नल प्रेस, इलाहाबाद
प्रकाशक—वैशाली संघ, मु० पो० वैशाली, जिला—मुजफ्फरपुर (बिहार)

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EDITORIAL NOTE

Commemoration volumes as a token of admiration or gratitude towards scholars or leaders of men are fairly common. The present volume strikes a new line; it endeavours to convey through its pages, pictures, and spirit, a people's homage to the memory of a unique city and all that it stood for. Vaiśālī, the metropolis of a fearless and illustrious republic in North Bihar, 2500 years ago, stands out as a landmark in the history of ancient India. Her glory is no more, but her memory, though dimmed through the ages, needs to be cherished as an inspiration, every time a new chapter of our history is opened. Little wonder, then, that when in 1945 the Vaisalian glories were sought to be recaptured through an organized cultural festival on the site of the old ruins, the response from the people was overwhelming and spontaneous beyond measure.

This symposium was originally planned for publication on the occasion of the first Vaiśālī Festival in 1945. War-time difficulties stood in our way then, and only a little handbook in Hindi could be brought out. Meanwhile in response to our request, eminent scholars of ancient history from different parts of the country favoured us with valuable contributions.

To these distinguished scholars—some of them the unquestioned authorities on their subjects—we cannot be too grateful, not only for their worthy contributions but also for their patience in having waited for the publication for these three years.

Even this year, the publication would not have been possible, had it not been for the generous grant of Rs. 2000/- made by the Premier of Bihar, the Hon'ble Dr. Sri Krishna Sinha, who is also the President of the Vaiśālī Sangha. For this timely and liberal help we offer him our deeply-felt thanks.

Our distinguished countryman Dr. Rajendra Prasad—whose home is not far from the seat of the Lichchhavi glories—has honoured us by writing the preface in spite of his numerous engagements.

Thanks are also due to Dr. S. C. Sarkar for his kind and wise guidance, Dr. K. K. Datta for his unfailing assistance in obtaining articles, correction of proofs and occasional valuable advice, the Archaeological Survey of India for allowing the use of their publications, the Curator, Patna Museum for the plates of some antiquities, Sri Amarendra Nath Banerji, B.Sc., Dip-in-Lib. Sc. (Cal.), Librarian, Patna College for making available necessary reference books required for preparing this volume, Prof. S. K. Ghose, Dr. Jagadish Narayan Sarkar and Sri Havaldar Tripathi 'Sahridaya' for help in the correction of proofs, Sri Dinesh Baxi for the frontispiece and Sri Devadatta for another illustration and the map. Mr. K. P. Dar of the Allahabad Law Journal Press, who undertook to print this volume, despite the innumerable demands on his press, has earned our sincerest gratitude.

Sri Ram Sinhasan Pande, Additional Deputy Secretary, Political Department, Bihar Government, raised a handsome amount for this publication when he was the S. D. O. at Hajipur. We are also grateful to Sri Ramlochan Sharan 'Bihari,' Proprietor of the Himalaya Press, Patna and Sri Jayanath Mishra, its Manager till 1947; both of them readily allowed the use of some beautiful blocks from the Press, for this volume.

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To those of our friends, who form the backbone of the Vaiśālī Sangha and whose services were readily available for the preparation of this volume, we need not convey in words our gratitude; for they are our own people. But special mention must be made of Sri Upendra Maharathi, whose artistic illustrations and sketches adorn these pages and Sri Bhola Nath 'Vimal', who volunteered to look after the management of the publication.

The Vaiśālī Sangha expects to follow up this volume by other standard publications on the cultural and historical life of this part of the country.

The Fourth Vaiśālī Festival,
April 21, 1948.

J. C. M.
Y. M.

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भूमिका

वैशाली का स्थान हमारे प्राचीन इतिहास में महत्त्वपूर्ण है। हम उसे भूल से गये थे। विद्वानों ने--विशेष करके स्वर्गीय काशीप्रसाद जायसवाल ने--हमारी आँखें खोलीं और उस अतीत के गौरव की एक झाँकी दिखलायी। तब से लोगों की अभिरुचि उसे जानने की बढ़ती गयी और वैशाली-महोत्सव उसका एक परिणाम हुआ। वैशाली-अभिनन्दन-ग्रन्थ उस पिपासा को, जो वैशाली सम्बन्धी ज्ञान के लिए है, दूर करने का एक प्रयत्न है। इसमें देश-विदेश के विद्वानों का सहयोग प्राप्त हुआ है और एक छोटा, पर विद्वत्तापूर्ण ग्रन्थ पाठकों की सेवा में भेंट है।

आज इस इतिहास के जानने की अधिक आवश्यकता प्रतीत होती है। बहुत दिनों के बाद आज स्वतंत्र प्रजातंत्र हम स्थापित कर रहे हैं। वह भारत के किसी एक छोटे-से कोने में नहीं, पर इसके सारे विशाल विस्तृत क्षेत्र में। हमारे सामने कठिनाइयों के पहाड़ दीख पड़ते हैं। उनको हमें लाँघना है। अपने विधान के निर्माण में हम बहुत करके पश्चिमीय देशों से--विशेष करके इंगलैण्ड और योरोप के दूसरे देशों तथा अमेरिका के इतिहास और विधानों से--ही बहुत कुछ लेना चाहते हैं। उसका एकमात्र कारण उन देशों के इतिहास और विधानों से अधिक परिचय है। वैशाली के इतिहास और वैधानिक कार्य-प्रणाली से हम बहुत सीख सकते हैं; पर हमारी जानकारी इतनी कम है कि उस ओर ध्यान तक नहीं जाता। अगर हमारा प्रजातंत्र स्थायी, सुव्यवस्थित, सुखी और दृढ़ होना चाहता है, तो उसे भी बुद्ध भगवान् के बतलाये वृजियों के "सत्त अपरिहाणि-धम्म" अर्थात् हानि न होने देने वाले सात धर्मों की व्यवस्था रखनी होगी। उन्हींमें प्रजातंत्र के मूलमंत्र मिलते हैं।

वैशाली का इतिहास केवल राजनीतिक दृष्टि से ही महत्त्वपूर्ण नहीं है। यह चौबीसवें तीर्थंकर वर्धमान महावीर का जन्मस्थान भी है और यहाँ पर ही बौद्धसंघ की प्रसिद्ध द्वितीय संगीति हुई थी। स्वयं बुद्ध भगवान् ने इस स्थान को बार-बार अपनी चरणरज देकर पवित्र और पावन बनाया था। इसकी बार-बार श्रीमुख से उन्होंने प्रशंसा की है और इसकी सभा की देवताओं की सभा से तुलना की है। यह ग्रन्थ इस गौरवपूर्ण प्रजातंत्र की स्मृति एक बार फिर से जाग्रत करे, यही मेरी आशा और अभिलाषा है।

(डा०) राजेन्द्रप्रसाद

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परिशिष्ट २

वैशाली संघ और वैशाली-महोत्सव १८७

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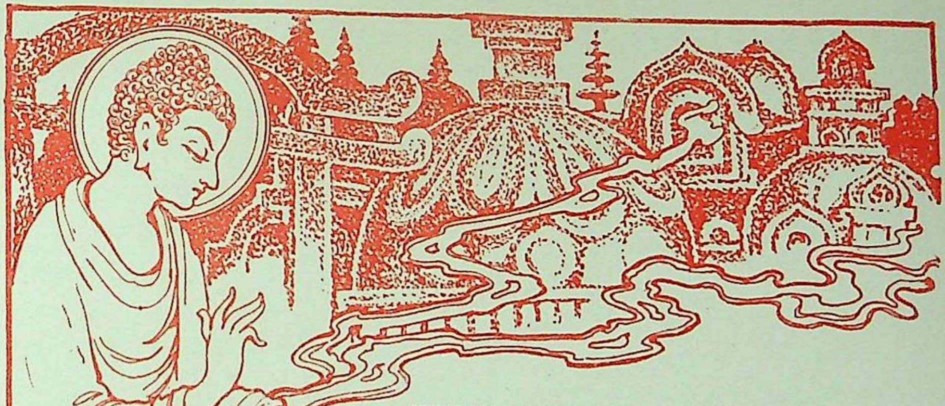

FROM THE LORD BUDDHA

भगवान् बुद्ध का प्रवचन

(पालि)

अथ खो भगवा आयस्मन्तं आनन्दं आमन्तेसि :—
'किन्ति ते आनन्द सुतं, वज्जी अभिण्हं सन्निपाता सन्निपात-बहुला'ति ?'

'सुतं मे तं भन्ते वज्जी अभिण्हं सन्निपाता सन्निपात-बहुला'ति ।'

'यावकीवञ्च आनन्द वज्जी अभिण्हं सन्निपाता सन्निपात-बहुला भविस्सन्ति, वुद्धि येन आनन्द वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानि ।

किन्ति ते आनन्द सुतं, वज्जी समग्गा सन्निपतन्ति, समग्गा वुट्ठहन्ति, समग्गा वज्जीकरणीयानि करोन्ती'ति ?' ।

'सुतं मे तं भन्ते वज्जी. . . .पे० . . . .करोन्ती'ति' ।

'यावकीवञ्च आनन्द वज्जी समग्गा सन्निपतिस्सन्ति, समग्गा वुट्ठहिस्सन्ति, समग्गा वज्जीकरणीयानि करिस्सन्ति, वुद्धि येव आनन्द वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानि ।

किन्ति ते आनन्द सुतं, वज्जी अप्पञ्ञत्तं न पञ्ञापेन्ति, पञ्ञत्तं न समुच्छिन्दन्ति, यथा पञ्ञत्ते पोराणे वज्जिधम्मे समादाय वत्तन्ती'ति ?' ।

'सुतं मे तं भन्ते वज्जी. . . .पे० . . . .समादाय वत्तन्ती'-ति' ।

'यावकीवञ्च आनन्द वज्जी अप्पञ्ञत्तं न पञ्ञापेस्सन्ति, पञ्ञत्तं न समुच्छिन्दिस्सन्ति, यथा पञ्ञत्ते पोराणे वज्जिधम्मे समादाय वत्तिस्सन्ति, वुद्धि येव आनन्द वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानि ।

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किन्ति ते आनन्द सुतं वज्जी ये ते वज्जीनं वज्जिमहल्लका ते सक्करोन्ति गरुकरोन्ति मानेन्ति पूजेन्ति तेसञ्च सोतब्बं मञ्ञन्ती'ति ?'।

'सुतं मे तं भन्ते वज्जी ये ते वज्जीनं वज्जिमहल्लका....पे०....सोतब्बं मञ्ञन्ती'ति'।

'यावकीवञ्च आनन्द वज्जी ये ते वज्जीनं वज्जिमहल्लका ते सक्करिस्सन्ति गरुकरिस्सन्ति मानेस्सन्ति पूजेस्सन्ति तेसञ्च सोतब्बं मञ्ञिस्सन्ति, वुद्धि येव आनन्द वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानि।

किन्ति ते आनन्द सुतं वज्जी या ता कुलित्थियो कुलकुमारियो ता न ओक्कस्स पसय्ह वासेन्ती'ति ?'।

'सुतं मे तं भन्ते वज्जी या ता कुलित्थियो....पे०....वासेन्ती'ति'।

'यावकीवञ्च आनन्द वज्जी या ता कुलित्थियो कुलकुमारियो ता न ओक्कस्स पसय्ह वासेस्सन्ति, वुद्धि येव आनन्द वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानि।

किन्ति ते आनन्द सुतं वज्जी यानि तानि वज्जीनं वज्जिचेतियानि अब्भन्तरानि चेव बाहिरानि च तानि सक्करोन्ति गरुकरोन्ति मानेन्ति पूजेन्ति तेसञ्च दिन्नपुब्बं कतपुब्बं धम्मिकं बलिं नो परिहापेन्ती'ति ?'।

'सुतं मे तं भन्ते वज्जी यानि तानि....पे०....परिहापेन्ती'ति'।

'यावकीवञ्च आनन्द वज्जी यानि तानि वज्जीनं वज्जिचेतियानि, अब्भन्तरानि चेव बाहिरानि च, तानि सक्करिस्सन्ति, गरुकरिस्सन्ति मानेस्सन्ति, पूजेस्सन्ति, तेसञ्च दिन्नपुब्बं कतपुब्बं धम्मिकं बलिं नो परिहापेस्सन्ति, वुद्धि येव आनन्द वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानि।

किन्ति ते आनन्द सुतं वज्जीनं अरहन्तेसु धम्मिका'रक्खा'वरणगुत्ति सुसंविहिता, किन्ति अनागता च अरहन्तो विजितं आगच्छेय्युं आगता च अरहन्तो विजिते फासुं विहरेय्युं'ति ?'।

'सुतं मे तं भन्ते वज्जीनं अरहन्तेसु....पे०....विहरेय्युं'ति'।

'यावकीवञ्च आनन्द वज्जीनं अरहन्तेसु धम्मिका'रक्खा'वरणगुत्ति सुसंविहिता भविस्सति, किन्ति, अनागता च अरहन्तो....पे०....विहरेय्युं'ति, वुद्धि येव आनन्द वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानी'ति'।

अथ खो भगवा वस्सकारं ब्राम्हणं मगधमहामत्तं आमन्तेसि :—

'एकं'मिदा'हं ब्राम्हण समयं वेसालियं विहरामि सारन्ददे चेतिये। तत्रा'हं वज्जीनं इमे सत्त अपरिहानिये धम्मे देसेसिं, यावकीवञ्च ब्राम्हण इमे सत्त अपरिहानिया धम्मा वज्जीसु ठस्सन्ति, इमेसु च सत्तसु अपरिहानियेसु धम्मेसु वज्जी सन्दिस्सन्ति, वुद्धि येव ब्राम्हण वज्जीनं पाटिकङ्खा नो परिहानी'ति'।

—From the Mahāparinibbāṇa Suttam, ch. 1 of the Dīgha Nikāya (Part II), edited by Prof. N. K. Bhagwat, M. A. (Bombay, 1936), pp. 60-62.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

And the Blessed One said to him: 'Have you heard, Ānanda, that the Vajjians hold full and frequent public assemblies?'

'Lord, so I have heard', replied he.

'So long, Ānanda', rejoined the Blessed One, 'as the Vajjians hold these full and frequent public assemblies; so long may they be expected not to decline, but to prosper.'

(And in the like manner questioning Ānanda, and receiving a similar reply, the Blessed One declared as follows the other conditions which would ensure the welfare of the Vajjian confederacy.[1])

'So long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians meet together in concord, and rise in concord, and carry out

[1] In the text there is a question, answer, and reply with each clause.—Tr.

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their undertakings in concord—so long as they enact nothing not already established, abrogate nothing that has been already enacted, and act in accordance with the ancient institutions of the Vajjians as established in former days—so long as they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajjian elders, and hold it a point of duty to hearken to their words—so long as no women or girls belonging to their clans are detained among them by force or abduction—so long as they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajjian shrines in town or country, and allow not the proper offerings and rites, as formerly given and performed, to fall into desuetude—so long as the rightful protection, defence, and support shall be fully provided for the Arahats among them, so that Arahats from a distance may enter the realm, and the Arahats therein may live at ease—so long may the Vajjians be expected not to decline, but to prosper.'

Then the Blessed One addressed Vassakâra the Brâhman, and said:

'When I was once staying, O Brâhman, at Vesāli at the Sârandada Temple, I taught the Vajjians these conditions of welfare; and so long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the Vajjians, so long as the Vajjians shall be well instructed in those conditions, so long may we expect them not to decline, but to prosper.'

—From the Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XI, translated by Mr. T. W. Rhys Davids (Oxford, 1900), pp. 3-4; also available in Dialogues of the Buddha, Part II, translated by Messrs. T. W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids (London, 1910), pp. 79—80.

हिन्दी अनुवाद

बुद्धदेव ने आनन्द से पूछा—क्यों आनन्द, तुमने क्या सुना है, क्या वज्जियों के जुटाव (सन्निपात) बार बार और भरपूर होते हैं (अर्थात् उनमें बहुत लोग जमा होते हैं)?

—श्रीमन्, मैंने ऐसा ही सुना है कि वज्जी बार बार इकट्ठे होते और उनके जुटाव भरपूर होते हैं।

—जब तक आनन्द, वज्जियों के जुटाव बार बार और भरपूर होते हैं, तब तक आनन्द, उनकी बढ़ती की ही आशा करनी चाहिए न कि परिहाणि की।

इसी प्रकार बुद्ध ने आनन्द से निम्नलिखित प्रश्न और पूछे—क्यों आनन्द, तुमने क्या सुना है, क्या वज्जी इकट्ठे जुटते, इकट्ठे उठते (उद्यम करते), और इकट्ठे वज्जीकरणीयों (अपने राष्ट्रीय कर्त्तव्यों) को करते हैं? क्या वज्जी (सभा द्वारा) बाकायदा कानून बनाये बिना कोई आज्ञा जारी नहीं करते, बने हुए नियम का उच्छेद नहीं करते, और नियम से चले हुए पुराने वज्जीधम्म (राष्ट्रीय कानून और संस्थाओं) के अनुसार मिल कर बर्त्तते हैं? क्या वज्जी वज्जियों के जो वृद्ध-बुजुर्ग हैं उनका आदर-सत्कार करते, उन्हें मानते-पूजते और उनकी सुनने लायक बातों को मानते हैं? क्या वज्जी जो उनकी कुल-स्त्रियाँ और कुल-कुमारियाँ हैं उन पर ज़ोर-ज़बर्दस्ती तो नहीं करते? क्या वज्जी जो उन वज्जियों के अन्दरले और बाहरले वज्जी चैत्य (जातीय मन्दिर—अरहतों की समाधियाँ) हैं, उनका आदर-सत्कार करते और उनके पहले दी हुई धार्मिक बलि को नहीं छीनते? क्या वज्जियों में अरहतों की रक्षा करने का भाव भली प्रकार है? क्या बाहर के अरहत उनके राज्य (विजित) में आ सकते हैं? और आये हुए सुगमता से विचर सकते हैं?

इन सातों प्रश्नों का उत्तर बुद्धदेव को वज्जियों के पक्ष में मिला और इसलिए उन्होंने प्रत्येक उत्तर सुनकर उनके अभ्युदय और वृद्धि की ही आशा प्रकट की।

बुद्धदेव जब वज्जि-रट्ठ में थे, तब स्वयं उन्होंने वज्जियों को ये सत्त अपरिहाणि-धम्म अर्थात् अवनति न होने की सात शर्तें समझायी थीं।

श्री जयचन्द्र विद्यालंकार

[भारतीय इतिहास की रूपरेखा, जिल्द १, द्वितीय संस्करण (इलाहाबाद, १९४१), पृष्ठ ४५२–४५३]

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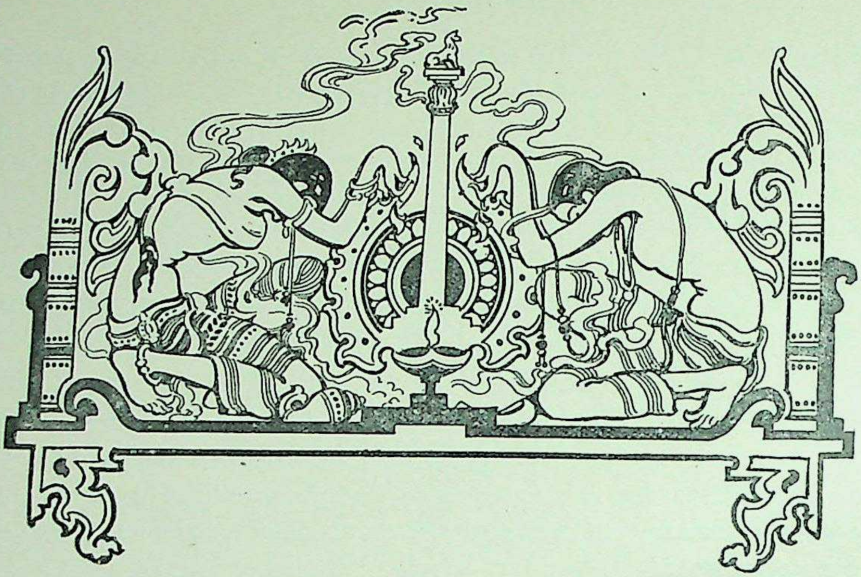

VAIŚĀLĪ IN INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE[1]

DR. RADHAKUMUD MOOKERJI, M.A., PH.D., P.R.S.

We are assembled here to-day at a place which is unique in India's History and Civilization. Vaiśālī is at once a holy and a historical place, the confluence of three streams of culture, Brahmanical, Jain, and Buddhist. We are all here as historical and religious pilgrims to take our purifying baths in the sacred streams of these cultural traditions, with which is charged the atmosphere of this place.

The history of this place has its roots in the remote past in the days of the story of *Rāmāyaṇa*, where it is stated that the Ikshvāku Queen Alambushā had a pious son named Viśāla, who founded the city which he called Viśālāpurī. Tenth in descent from Viśāla was King Sumati who figures as a host of Śrī Rāmachandra. King Viśāla is also mentioned in some of the Purāṇas like Varāha, Nārada, Mārkaṇḍeya, or Bhāgavata. These sources, however, do not agree in regard to the historical traditions they present. But it is undeniable that the history of Vaiśālī dates back to pre-historic origins.

Vaiśālī first emerges into history as the birthplace of one of the great leaders of Jainism, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the 24th of the Jain Tīrthaṅkaras. Mahāvīra was born in one of the three districts of Vaiśālī, known as Vaiśālī proper, Kuṇḍagrāma or Kundapura and Vaṇiyā-grāma. The centre of Kunaḍgrāma was a place called Kollāga, described as *Ñāya-Kula*, i.e., the home of the people called Jñātṛikas, of whom Mahāvīra was born (*Uvāsagadasāo*). Therefore Mahāvīra became known as *Vesālie*, i.e., a *Vaiśālika*, in the *Sūtra Kritāṅga*, 'the first citizen of Vaiśālī.'

Vaiśālī was then at the height of its prosperity with its three districts containing, according to the Tibetan tradition, houses numbering 7000, 14000 and 21000 respectively, and, according to a *Jātaka*, was encompassed by three walls with their separate gates and watch-towers. According to the *Mahāvastu*, the citizens of Vaiśālī were distinguished as *Abhyantara*-Vaiśālikas, the cockneys of the city, and *Bāhira* Vaiśālikas, the citizens of Greater-Vaiśālī, outside the Metropolis, and their total number was

[1] Presidential address delivered at the First Vaiśālī Festival at Vaiśālī, on March 31, 1945.

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"twice 84000"=1,68,000. The early Buddhist work *Mahāvagga* describes Vaiśālī as "an opulent, prosperous and populous town, with 7707 storeyed-buildings, 7707 pinnacled buildings, 7707 *Ārāmas* and 7707 lotus-ponds", with its *Rājās* or chiefs also numbering 7707. It will not be quite fair to assume that this description of the city contained in canonical Buddhist texts is imaginary or fictitious. Each of these chiefs decorated the Capital with a variety of structures, houses and palaces, Chaityas and Vihāras. The Buddhist Texts single out eight of its famous *Chaityas* which were (*i*) Udena to the east of Vaiśālī, (*ii*) Gotamaka to the south, (*iii*) Saptāmraka (Sattamba) to the west, (*iv*) Bahuputra on the north, (*v*) Chāpāla, (*vi*) Kapinahya, (*vii*) Sārandada and (*viii*) Markaṭahrada. The Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī made a gift of all these shrines to the Buddha.

I appeal to the public of this holy region to identify among its ruins some of these famous monuments associated with the Great Buddha.

The personality and preachings of Mahāvīra rapidly built up Vaiśālī as a centre of Jainism and of the spiritual discipline and asceticism upon which it was based. Vaiśālī thus achieved an early reputation in the religious world of India for its teachers devoted to the practice of uttermost penance and austerity, of which Mahāvīra stood out as the most prominent example. When the Buddha renounced the world and became a monk, his first task naturally was the quest of the teacher which, according to the Upanishads, was the first step in religious life. As the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* states, a man blindfolded cannot even find his way home. He can arrive at the home of Truth, when the bandage of his eyes is removed by the teacher, who restores to him his eye-sight or spiritual insight. His quest of the teacher led the unknown Buddha, the Bodhisattva, to proceed towards Vaiśālī as the place which was then known for its abundance of spiritual teachers. There Buddha found his teacher Ālāra Kālāma, a native of Vaiśālī according to *Mahāvastu* (II, 118). Ālāra was so advanced in meditation that sitting on the road, he did not hear or see even 500 carts rattling past him (*Mahāparinibbāṇa-suttanta* IV, 35). Mrs. Rhys Davids has also recorded her conclusion that the Buddha found his first two teachers, Ālāra and Uddaka, at Vaiśālī and even started his religious life as a Jain under their teachings. A support for the Buddha's Jaina beginnings may be found in the fact that he gave himself upto to a course of austerities associated with Jainism by which he reduced himself to a mere skeleton, skin and bones, by ultimately limiting his food to the quantity that could be held in his hollowed palm, in the manner of a good Jain like Mahāvīra. As is well known, his health was not equal to this extreme of mortification; then he parted company with Jainism and discovered for himself the *Middle-path*, for which Buddhism is known, the path that lies between the two extremes of self-torture and self-indulgence.

This early contact of Gautama, as an aspiring ascetic, with Vaiśālī is not so well known. But his first visit to Vaiśālī, as the Buddha, has been fully described in the Texts with a touch of romance. The city was then under the scourge of a fearful epidemic of plague to which it could not find any antidote. Its Municipal Council then thought of a remedy, that it should have the city purged of its impurities and purified by the sacred feet of the Buddha treading its thoroughfares. It, accordingly, sent an invitation to the Buddha to pay a visit to the city and appointed its President, Tomara, as its representative to receive the Buddha. The Buddha was given a right royal rousing reception by a procession of elephants and chariots, decked with gold, along the whole road from the Ganges to the city, a distance of nearly 50 miles, which was bedecked with flags, garlands, and embroidered cloth, and was watered and perfumed with showers of flowers and burning of incense, along its whole

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length as the Buddha passed by.

His reception was followed by arrangements for his permanent connexion with the city. Besides the eight aforesaid shrines, the city built for him the pinnacled rest-house (*Kūṭāgāra-śālā*) in its suburban and solitary retreat known as the Mahāvana. Some of the rich ladies of the city also placed at his disposal other resting-places of the kind that he loved. The courtesan Āmrapalī gave him her famous mango-grove and lady Bālikā her *Bālikārāma*.

India's greatest men are always fond of her woods and forests, their solitude and silence, which are conducive to meditation. Her highest thought was the product, not of her cities but her hermitages. The Buddha delivered many of his discourses at the sylvan retreat of Mahāvana. Some of the Pāli Texts tell us how the Bhikkhus themselves acted as architects in supervising its constructions, and how, failing such supervision, a building came to grief because, "the laying was out of line and the walls fell down" (*Chullavagga, VI*).

Vaiśālī is also noted in the history of Buddhism as the place where Buddha first permitted the order of nuns against his own wishes at the instance of Ānanda and his foster-mother, Mahāprajāpatī, who became the first Buddhist nun at Vaiśālī.

Vaiśālī marks another important land-mark in the history of Buddhism, as the place where the Second Buddhist Council was held. The Council was called for by the critical situation created in the Buddhist church, by the Buddhists of Vaiśālī, who introduced Ten Innovations in Doctrine and Practice, which were supposed to be against law. These innovations were first detected by the Buddhist Divine (*Sthavira*) Yaśas, when he came to Vaiśālī and was staying in the Mahāvana. Unable to convince these offending Monks of their error, he sent his summons to the Brethren of the different quarters, West, and South, and Avanti to an Assembly, to decide the issue. The Brethren flocked together from different regions at his call. These monks decided that the most authoritative Buddhist of the day, the Divine Revata, should be asked to preside at the Assembly. It was with difficulty that he was found out and persuaded to come and take part in a controversy.

The Vaiśālī monks tried to win over Revata by even bribing his disciple Uttara.

The first question that Revata settled was that the Saṁgha must decide the issue at the place of its origin, viz., Vaiśālī.

The Council did not have smooth sailing, and, as it could not come to a conclusion, Revata decided to refer the dispute to a committee of eight, four monks of the East, and four of the West. The Committee met at Bālikārāma as a secluded spot. With the Committee was associated the oldest Thera Sabbakāmin by name, of highest authority. The committee decided against the Vajjian monks. The decision was put before the plenary Session of the Assembly (*Saṁgīti*) attended by 700 monks. The *Vinaya* was rehearsed at the Assembly and its text was settled. Some of the members brought with them the copies of the *Vinaya* current in their districts, while others trusted to their memory, in presenting before the council the exact teachings of the first apostles. Each of the Vaiśālī innovations was separately condemned by vote as being against the *Vinaya*, on the strength of the *Sūtras* or the *Vinaya* concerned. Then the Council proceeded to reduce to order and finally decide the Text of the *Vinaya*.

It was thus left to Vaiśālī to play a most important part in the history of Buddhism and the evolution of its canonical literature.

The Sinhalese documents record the tradition that, after the Second Buddhist Council had ended,

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the losing party, who were called the "wicked Bhikkhus, the ex-communicated Vajji-Puttakas," held a council of their own (*Mahāsaṁgīti*). The schism apparently became serious. This rival council established what is called the *Mahāsaṁgika* School or *Āchāryavāda*, as against the orthodox *Theravāda* of the other council. It seems that the Mahāsaṁgikas made a new collection of scriptures and did not confine their attention merely to the ten points of the dispute. They are also stated to have met in Kūṭāgāraśālā of the Mahāvana, the holy abode of the Buddha himself, which was in their possession.

These traditions made Vaiśālī the first centre of schism and heresy within the Buddhist church, as embodied in the Mahāsaṁghika School, which branched off from the orthodox doctrine, as a separate sect, with its own redactions of the canonical Scriptures.

It is to be noted that the material prosperity of Vaiśālī and its cultural progress were ultimately due to its National and Popular Government. It was governed by a Republic, the like of which was not seen in India's entire history. The Buddha was a born republican, but the Lichchhavis were the older Republicans. The Lichchhavi Republican President, Cheṭaka, took the lead in organising a Federation of Republics comprising 9 Mallakis, and 18 *Gaṇa-rājas* of Kāśī-Kośalas besides the 9 Lichchhavi Republics.

The Lichchhavi Republic itself was organised as a vast Confederation known as Vajjian Confederation, with its governing body of 7707 *Rājās* represented in its Federal Assembly. Probably, as the *Lalita-vistara* explains, the title *Rājā* was then used for a republican citizen. The Executive of each Republic was a body of eight (*Ashṭakula*) representing its different sections, each of which had its own uniform and colour. There were thus Republics of following colours, blue (*nīla*), yellow (*pīta*), green (*harit*), light red (*mañjishṭha*), red (*lohita*), white (*śveta* or *odāta*) and variegated or mixed (*vyāyukta*). These colours marked everything about them, dress, horses, chariots, turbans, umbrellas, down to shoes, whips and sticks. (*Mahāpari. Suttanta, S.B.E.XI.* 31; *Aṅgu. P.T.S., ii*, 239; *Mahāvastu, i*, 259; *Dīgha, ii*, 96). The 9 Lichchhavis were in charge of foreign policy and the *Ashṭakulakas* of domestic affairs including justice. The Judicial officers were known as *Viniśchaya-Mahāmātras* to ascertain the facts of the case, the *Vyavahārikas*, legal experts and *Sūtradharas*, proficient in legal texts. An appeal lay from the ordinary courts to *Senāpati*, the military chief, and from him to the civil chief or the Deputy-King (*Upa-rāja*), and from him to the *Rājā* as the final judge.

The working of the Republic conformed to Buddha's famous injunctions viz: (1) that its Assemblies should be frequently held and fully attended; (2) that they should meet and act in concord; (3) that it should respect its ancient laws, customs and institutions; and (4) that it should honour its spiritual leaders and women-folk.

The Republic showed its efficiency in producing a higher cultural level in its people. The Buddha himself has testified how the Lichchhavi youth were free from luxury and sloth, "sleeping with logs of wood as pillows, and not on pillows of the finest cotton, active in archery and not delicate, tender, and soft in their arms and legs" (*Saṃ.* II, 267-8), and were fond of manly sports, "training elephants, and hunting with dogs." They were also keen on education. We read of Mahāli, going to Taxila for study and on returning educating 500 Lichchhavi youths, who again became teachers and spread education through the country.

Vaiśālī maintained its position as one of India's greatest cities for several centuries. Even 1000 years after the Buddha, Vaiśālī figures as the Capital or Headquarters (*Adhishṭhāna*) of a Province of

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the Gupta Empire, as will appear from the find of Inscribed Seals excavated here by the Archaeological Department. These Inscriptions mention the name of the Province as *Tīra-bhukti* of which the modern name is Tirhut Division, with its headquarters removed from Vaiśālī to Muzaffarpur. These Inscriptions show that Vaiśālī was then not merely the political, but the cultural and commercial Capital of the Province. It was at once a centre of Administration, Business and Industry. Seals were issued by three classes of its guilds, (*Nigamas* or *Śreṇis*), those of Bankers (*Sreshṭhin*), Traders (*Sārthavāha*) and Artisans (*Kulika*). Each of these guilds had its President or *Prathama*. The Inscriptions tell us of Federations of Guilds, of Guilds of *Śreshṭhi-Kulika-Nigama*, or of all the three guilds *Śreshṭhi-Sārthavāha-Kulika-Nigama*.

These Seals also speak of the District Office of Vaiśālī as *Vaiśālī-adhishṭhāna-adhikaraṇa*.

These were the days of the famous Gupta Emperor Chandra Gupta II Vikramāditya (*c.* 376-414) who is rendered more famous by the record, left by the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien who visited India in 399-414 A.D., of what he saw of India's civilization. At this time what he then saw of Vaiśālī is of very great interest to us. He still saw here in existence the *Mahāvana Vihāra*, with its double tower or the Upper Storeyed-Hall, the *Kūṭāgāra* Hall, where Buddha used to stay. He also saw the ruins of the Vihāra given by Ambapālī at Āmra-Vana. Can't we trace out what Fa-Hien had seen of Vaiśālī's ancient monuments ?

Vaiśālī was seen in its decline and ruins by the other Chinese Pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang, when he visited it three centuries later. He noticed that Vaiśālī was "a fertile region abounding in mangoes, plantains, and other fruits" with its people honest, industrious, devoted to learning and to both Brāhmanism and Buddhism. He saw hundreds of Buddhist Vihāras dilapidated and deserted, a number of Brāhmanical temples, and Digambaras flourishing. Hiuen-Tsang refers to the foundations of the old city extending to a great length and also the walled part of the city, together with a Buddhist Sammatīya monastery in the neighbourhood, and a *stūpa* erected to the memory of Maudgalyāyana. Near the *stūpa* was the one in which were enshrined the relics of the Buddha, of which a portion was seized by the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī from the Mallas of Kuśinārā. Next, he noticed the Asoka pillar surmounted by the lion, and the Markaṭahrada near the Kūṭāgāraśālā. The Pilgrim in fact tried to identify all the places associated with early Buddhism in the time of its founder. For instance, he traces the houses of Vimalakīrti, Ratnākara and Āmrapālī, known in early Buddhist history. But it is difficult to trace the lost traditions of these ruins. He traced the Āmravana and the *Ārāma* given to the Buddha by Ambapālī and the Buddhist shrine and *stūpa* marking the spot. Hiuen-Tsang in fact tries to relate tradition to locality.

His most interesting observation relates to the Great *Stūpa* which was erected at the place where "700 eminent sages made the second compilation." This was the place where the Second Buddhist Council was held. This *Stūpa* was also noticed by Fa-Hien. According to Chinese texts, the place where the Buddhist Council was held was the Bālikārāma.

It must have been distressing to the Chinese Pilgrim to pace over the ruins of a district, which he had known from the Buddhist Scriptures to have been so much loved by the Buddha, and a centre of prosperity and democracy, and now converted into a wilderness.

Let us recapture some of this lost glory of this city and our National Cultural Heritage by a well-planned scheme of its revival and renovation.

We should make a start in our process and programme of reconstruction by a revival of archaeo-

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logical excavation of its numerous mounds in which are buried its hidden treasures. We should also construct a Museum in which its antiquities may be housed and properly preserved, so that the people may see in it a visible picture of its glorious past. Lastly, we should reconstruct Vaiśālī, by having here a modernised monastery, a residential public school, where students will grow up in an atmosphere recalling all that is highest and noblest in India's immortal traditional culture.

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वैशाली की महत्ता[1]

प्रोफेसर ओ० सी० गांगुली, कलकत्ता

आप लोग जानते हैं कि यह उत्सव हमारे प्राचीन संस्कृति-केन्द्र को जातीय जीवन में जाग्रत कर रखने के लिए मनाया जा रहा है। यह संस्कृति-केन्द्र हमारे भारत के दो महान् धर्मों––अर्थात् जैन और बौद्ध धर्मों––की पवित्र स्मृति से आज भी उज्ज्वल हो रहा है। इस संस्कृति में मानो परम्परा से आज तक युगों की लम्बी सड़क पर महावीर और बुद्धदेव इन दोनों महात्माओं की पदध्वनि सुनाई दे रही है। इन दोनों महापुरुषों के शक्तिमान् व्यक्तित्व ने भारत की आध्यात्मिक संस्कृति की प्रतिमा को भारतीयों के मनमन्दिर में सदा के लिए अमर बना दिया है। सिर्फ भारतीयों के हृदय में ही नहीं, बल्कि विश्व के मानव-समाज के हृदय में भी; क्योंकि सारे संसार के इतिहास में ऐसा हृदयविदारक, घोरहिंसापूर्ण और मनुष्य के हृदय को एवं मनुष्यता को ऐसी निर्दयता के साथ टुकड़ा-टुकड़ा करने वाला सर्वनाश इसके पहले कभी भी उपस्थित नहीं हुआ था। इस कठिन बीमारी को दूर करने के लिए उन दो महापुरुषों की मूल्यवान् वाणी संसार में प्रेम और एकता की सृष्टि करती है। आज उन दो महापुरुषों की विश्वशान्ति की अमरवाणी की संसार को इतनी अधिक जरूरत है, जितनी इसके पहले कभी भी नहीं थी।

हमारे देश के पूर्वकाल के मेले और विभिन्न धार्मिक उत्सव जो बराबर परम्परा से आज तक होते चले आ रहे हैं उनका मूल उद्देश्य है जातीय जीवन की एकता को गणतन्त्र के विस्तृत क्षेत्र में प्रतिष्ठित करना। यह सुन्दर भाव से भरा हुआ मिलन समस्त क्षेत्रों में एक सम्मिलन-भूमि की सृष्टि करके भारतीयों में विस्तृत हो रहा है––जिस सम्मिलन-भूमि में ऊँच-नीच, अमीर और गरीब, भरपेटवाला और भूखा, बूढ़ा और जवान, गम्भीर और चलते-पुर्जे इन्सान विचित्र असंख्य भीड़ों में धक्के पर धक्के खाकर भी परम्परा से जमा होते चले आ रहे हैं––जिस मिलन-भूमि में विभिन्न दायरे के ज्ञान-बुद्धि और इल्म वाले नर-नारी बहुत निकट और घनिष्ठ भाव से मिलने का सुयोग पाकर अपने-अपने जीवन, चिन्ता और मन की भावनाओं का विनिमय करके मनुष्यता की कमी को परिपूर्ण कर लेते हैं। इस प्रकार के सम्मेलन में खरीद-फरोख्त कारीगरों के हाथ की बनायी नाना प्रकार की शिल्पवस्तुओं और उस्ताद कलाकारों द्वारा बनायी हुई मनोहर कलावस्तुओं तक ही सीमित नहीं रहती, बल्कि विभिन्न सहृदय लोगों के दिलों की खरीद-बिक्री और हृदयों की तिजारत के कारण इन असंख्य नर-नारियों के दिलों का वास्तविक सम्मेलन सफल हो उठता है। इस तरीके से नाना प्रकार के खिलौनों और गुड़ियों को बेचने और खरीदने के बीच से, देवी-देवताओं की मूर्ति और धर्मसाधना के उपकरण के बीच से, बहुत से खेल और आनन्द की हिलोरों के बीच से, अनेक धर्म-ग्रन्थपाठ एवं आनन्द और दिल्लगी के बीच से, 'सिताबों-कलाबों' के तमाशों और 'नागर दोला' की आनन्दमयी हिलोरों के बीच से, नाच और गान के हावभाव और आँखों के इशारों के बीच से, विभिन्न श्रेणी के इन्सानों के दिलों में मजबूत दोस्ती का पक्का पुल तैयार हो जाता है।

हमलोग जानते हैं कि हमारा भारतवर्ष बहुत दूर तक फैला हुआ है और नाना सूबों का एक संगठित महाप्रदेश है, जिसके चारों ओर है अनन्त आसमान और फैली हुई है अनन्त विस्तृत जमीन। इतने लम्बे फासले को पार करके इन्सान और इन्सानों की चिन्ताधारा हमारे घरों तक पहुँचने में काफी समय लेती है और अनेक युगपरम्परा से यह बात चली आ रही है। गर्द और कीचड़ से भरे हुए सारे दूर-दूर के रास्ते पार करके इन्सानों के दिल की बातें––बैलगाड़ी और ऊँटों की कतार की धीमी रफ्तारों से और कभी थके हुए तीर्थयात्री और पस्तहिम्मत मुसाफिर के कन्धे पर चढ़ कर––धीरे-धीरे एक सूबे से दूसरे सूबे में आया-जाया करती हैं। मुसाफिर और तीर्थयात्री मोक्ष देने वाले प्राचीन नगरों के विभिन्न मन्दिरों में देवी-देवताओं के दर्शनों के लोभ से, मोक्ष और बहिश्त के रास्ते पर आगे बढ़ने की आशा और इरादे को लेकर, युग-युग से जिन सारे तीर्थयात्रा के रास्तों पर आया-जाया करते हैं, वे सारे तीर्थस्थान परस्पर एक दूसरे से फासले पर

[1] प्रथम वैशाली-महोत्सव में पहली अप्रैल, १९४५ ई० को दिया गया भाषण।

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ग्रौर ग्रनजान लोगों की भीड़ों से परिपूर्ण हैं। इन सब ग्रनजान ग्रौर ग्रपरिचित लोगों के साथ जान-पहचान करने का एक सीधा ग्रौर साफ रास्ता है—

"यह रसना वस में करो, धरो गरीबी भेस।
सीतल बोली ले चलो, सभी तुम्हारा देस॥"

हमारे देश के ये सारे प्राचीन मेले ग्रौर धार्मिक उत्सव—जो एक लम्बे जमाने से, पर्व-पर्व में, ऋतु-ऋतु में, नियमित रूप से गाँव-गाँव ग्रौर शहर-शहर में होते हुए चले ग्रा रहे हैं—फैली हुई लम्बी दूरी को खतम कर देते हैं ग्रौर हमारे रहने के घर के सामने कितने ही दूर देश के इन्सानों के खयालात को पेश करते हैं। कितने ही दूर देश के इन्सानों के हाथ की बनायी हुई वस्तुग्रों को ये हमारे सामने ला देते हैं। यही नहीं, ये कितने ही साधुग्रों ग्रौर संन्यासियों को, कितने ही पीर, पैगम्बर ग्रौर फकीरों को—जो सुदूर प्रान्तों के विभिन्न पर्वतों में बैठ कर ग्रपनी साधना ग्रौर तपस्या के बल से धर्मजगत् के ग्रनेक ऊँचे वृक्षों के फलों को तोड़ कर चखते हैं—हमारे सामने ला देते हैं। इस तरीके से रेलगाड़ी ग्रौर हवागाड़ी, टेलीग्राफ ग्रौर हवाई जहाजों के इस देश में ग्राने के बहुत पहले से नाना प्रकार के नवीन भाव ग्रौर ग्रादर्श, नाना प्रकार की बहुमूल्य शान्तिवाणियाँ ग्रौर मोक्षलाभ के उपदेश—काल ग्रौर स्थान की विस्तृत दूरी के ग्रड़ंगों को पार करके—ग्राते-जाते रहे हैं। भारतीय संस्कृति के प्रचार के इतिहास में हमारे इन सारे प्रचारों ग्रौर धार्मिक उत्सवों ने, तीर्थयात्रियों के जमघट ग्रौर उनके विश्रामनिवास तथा धर्मशालाग्रों के बीच से, ऊँचे खयालात ग्रौर ग्रादर्शों पर ग्राने-जाने का रास्ता सहल कर दिया है। हमारे जुलाहों के ताँत की मकू जैसे कपड़े बुनते समय एक तरफ से दूसरी तरफ दौड़ती है, वैसे ही हमारे जातीय जीवन के रंगीन डोरों से धवलित कपड़ों की उस तसवीर को युग-युग की परम्परा ने ग्रमर कर रखा है।

प्राचीन साहित्य में—जैनधर्म ग्रौर बौद्धधर्म के पुराण, उपपुराण, ग्रवदान ग्रौर कहानियों में, ग्रौर प्राचीन नाटक तथा कथा-साहित्य में—हम लोग मेलों ग्रौर उत्सवों का विचित्र ग्रौर रंगीन वर्णन पाते हैं, जिससे हमें मालूम होता है कि साधारण इन्सानों के ग्रन्धकारमय नीरस जीवन में ये सारे मेले ग्रौर उत्सव कभी-कभी बीच-बीच में कैसे ग्रानन्द ग्रौर रंग का दीपक जला देते हैं, दुखी के दिल में, गरीब की ग्रात्मा में ग्रौर ग्रानन्दहीन इन्सानों के हृदय में कैसी सुन्दर खुशी का फुहारा पैदा कर देते हैं, ग्रौर इन्सानों के मन के उल्लास ग्रौर इरादे कैसे ग्रजीब नाच-गानों के छन्द में नयी जिन्दगी पाकर उछल उठते हैं।

"मातुपोसक जातक" नाम की एक बौद्ध कहानी में बुद्धदेव के पूर्वजन्म की कथा है, जिसमें एक विशेष प्रकार के उत्सव का वर्णन ग्राया है। तब ब्रह्मदत्त काशी के राजा थे ग्रौर बोधिसत्त्व ने हिमालय में एक बड़े हाथी के रूप में जन्म लिया था। करण्ड मठ में ब्रह्मदत्त ने बोधिसत्त्व की हाथी की शकल की मूर्ति की स्थापना की ग्रौर विभिन्न प्रकार की पूजा ग्रौर सत्कार के द्वारा उस मूर्ति को सम्मानित किया। उस दिन से प्रति वर्ष एक निर्धारित पर्व के दिन यह हस्ति-उत्सव मनाने के लिए सारे हिन्दुस्तान के लोग इकट्ठे होकर इस उत्सव को सफल करते थे।

एक ग्रौर प्राचीन उत्सव की बात हमलोग इतिहास के पन्नों में पाते हैं। यह उत्सव जैन ग्रौर बौद्ध धर्म के ग्राने के बहुत पहले से ही ग्रनुष्ठित होता चला ग्राया है। इस उत्सव का नाम है "शालभंजिका"। एक खास दिन में शालवृक्ष के पुष्पयुक्त पत्तों को तोड़ना ही इस उत्सव का मूल हुग्रा। प्राचीन बौद्ध साहित्य में इस उत्सव की रंगदार कहानियों का वर्णन हमें प्रायः मिलता है ग्रौर कवि राजशेखर की 'विद्धशालभंजिका' नामक नाटिका में हमें इस उत्सव का विस्तृत वर्णन उपलब्ध होता है। बौद्ध इतिहास के प्राचीन शिल्पकेन्द्र ग्रमरावती में पत्थर की चट्टानों पर इसके मनोरम शिलाचित्र खुदे हुए हैं।

'कौमुदी-महोत्सव' इस तरीके का एक ग्रौर प्राचीन ऋतु-उत्सव है, जो वसन्त-काल के समागम में भारत के नाना प्रान्तों में बहुत प्राचीन काल से होता हुग्रा चला ग्रा रहा है। उत्तर-पश्चिम भारत के नाना स्थानों में रामलीला के ग्रनुष्ठान ग्रौर वार्षिकोत्सव एवं कृष्णलीला ग्रौर विष्णु-पूजा के साथ नाना उत्सव ग्रौर पर्व ग्रभी भी इतने सुपरिचित ग्रौर प्रचलित हैं जिनका वर्णन करना निरर्थक है। हम सभी जानते हैं कि इन सारे धार्मिक उत्सवों ने जातीय जीवन को ग्रपने उज्ज्वल वर्ण ग्रौर रस से जीवित रखा है।

परन्तु ग्राज मैं इन सारे जातीय उत्सवों का वर्णन करने ग्रौर इतिहास की माला बनाने के लिए यहाँ नहीं ग्राया हूँ। हमारे ये सब धार्मिक उत्सव ग्रौर पर्व दरिद्रता, ग्रार्थिक दुर्दशा एवं राजनीतिक ग्रन्याय के कारण ग्रब प्रभाहीन, वर्णहीन ग्रौर प्राणहीन हो चले हैं। बहुत से क्षेत्रों में हमारे ग्रनेक उत्सव, केवल ग्रति प्राचीन होने के कारण बिलकुल जीर्णशीर्ण हो गये हैं ग्रौर ग्रपनी लोकप्रियता खो रहे हैं।

इन सारे पर्वों के ग्रन्दर फिर से एक नवजागरण की सृष्टि करना बहुत ही जरूरी है—उनके साथ वर्तमान भारतीय जीवन की मनोभावनाग्रों को संयुक्त करना ग्रत्यन्त ग्रावश्यक है। हमारे नवीन जीवन के रास्ते में जो पूरे ताल के साथ चल सकेंगे, हमारी वर्तमान मनोभावनाग्रों का जो सफलतापूर्वक प्रतिनिधित्व कर सकेंगे, वही पर्व काल की इस कठोर चट्टान पर टिक सकेंगे ग्रौर इसी उपाय से प्राचीन पर्वों में नवीन जीवन लाया जा सकेगा।

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विश्वकवि रवीन्द्रनाथ के शन्तिनिकेतन में बहुत से नवीन उत्सव बड़े धूमधाम के साथ मनाये जाते हैं, जिनमें वहाँ के छात्र और अध्यापकगण बहुत ही उत्साह के साथ शरीक होते हैं। इनमें एक का नाम 'वृक्षरोपण उत्सव', एक का नाम 'हलचालन उत्सव', एक का नाम 'वर्षामङ्गल उत्सव', एक का नाम 'शारद उत्सव' और एक का नाम 'माघ उत्सव' है।

एक तरफ जहाँ नवीन भावों के उद्दीपन के लिए नये-नये उत्सवों की परिकल्पना की जरूरत है, दूसरी ओर उसी प्रकार प्राचीन काल के उत्सवों के नूतन अर्थ लगाने होंगे और इन उत्सवों में एक नवीन दृष्टान्त दिखलाना होगा। इस तरीके से पुरानी चीज नया रूप ग्रहण करके हमेशा के लिए जीवित हो उठेगी।

और, मैं आशा करता हूँ कि वैशाली की यह नवीन उत्सव-कल्पना न केवल हमारी वर्तमान जीवनधारा को हमारी संस्कृति के ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठों के साथ प्राचीन धारा की जंजीरों में बाँध देगी, बल्कि नूतन युग की नूतन भावनाओं के नये-नये रास्ते भी खोल देगी, और नयी-नयी आशाओं और इरादों को जाग्रत करके हमारे कौमी जीवन की बहुत सी शाखाओं में नये जमाने की सृष्टि करेगी।

आइये सज्जनो! अब हमलोग भारतीय संस्कृति के इतिहास में वैशाली का स्थान कहाँ है, इसका अनुसन्धान करें।

आज के दिन की वैशाली कुछ थोड़े से लोगों की बस्ती को लेकर कई गाँवों का एक मण्डल है। एक जमाने में यही वैशाली भारत की एक बृहत् और विशाल नगरी थी। और यही वैशाली थी एक दिन सारी दुनिया के अन्दर गणतन्त्र की सबसे पुरानी और सुप्रसिद्ध केन्द्रस्थली।

रामायण में यह नगर 'विशाला' या 'उत्तमपुरी' के नाम से वर्णित है। प्रसिद्ध राजा इक्ष्वाकु के पुत्र राजा विशाल ने इस नगर का निर्माण किया था। उनकी माता का नाम अलम्बुषा था। यथा—

इक्ष्वाकोस्तु नरव्याघ्रः पुत्रः परमधार्मिकः।
अलम्बुषायामुत्पन्नो विशाल इति विश्रुतः।
तेन चासीदिहस्थाने विशालेति पुरी कृता।
रामायण, बालकाण्ड, सर्ग ४७, श्लोक ११-१२

विष्णुपुराण के मत में राजा विशाल इक्ष्वाकु-वंश के तृणविन्दु राजा के पुत्र थे। इस पौराणिक इतिहास की कहानी 'राजा विशाल का गढ़' इस नाम के अन्दर प्रतिध्वनित हो रही है। श्रीरामचन्द्रजी जब इस नगर में उपस्थित हुए, तब इस प्रदेश के राजा थे राजा सुमति। ऋषि विश्वामित्र के कथनानुसार वैशाली के सभी राजा दीर्घायु, महात्मा, वीर्यवान् और सुधार्मिक थे।

लेकिन अगर हमलोग रामायण की वर्णना को कल्पित समझ कर न मानें, तब जैनधर्म के यकीन कराने वाले इतिहास के पन्ने हमारे सामने खड़े हैं। क्योंकि इसी वैशाली के नजदीक 'कुण्डग्राम' में जैनधर्म के आखिरी तीर्थङ्कर महावीर ने जन्म लिया था। इसलिए महावीर का एक और नाम था 'वैशालिक' और उनकी जननी त्रिशला का दूसरा नाम था 'विशाला'।

लेकिन ब्राह्मणधर्म और जैनधर्म के अतिरिक्त वैशाली विशेष प्रकार से भगवान् बुद्ध और बौद्धधर्म के इतिहास के साथ संयुक्त है। पहले यह मगध साम्राज्य की राजधानी पाटलिपुत्र और अन्य बड़े-बड़े शहरों के साथ सीधे राजपथ के द्वारा मिली हुई थी और बुद्धदेव अक्सर राजगृह एवं पाटलिपुत्र से वैशाली आते थे।

वैशाली नगर की प्राचीन कहानी प्राचीन बौद्ध ग्रन्थों में लिखी हुई है। उदाहरणार्थ तिब्वती 'विनयग्रन्थ' में इस नगर का निम्न-लिखित वर्णन हमलोग पाते हैं—"वैशाली शहर तीन खास महल्लों में बिभक्त था। पहले महल्ले में सात हजार मकान थे, जिनकी गुम्बजें सोने से ढकी हुई थीं; बीच के महल्ले में चौदह हजार मकान थे, जिनकी गुम्बजें चाँदी से मढ़ी हुई थीं और आखिरी महल्ले में इक्कीस हजार मकान थे, जिनकी गुम्बजें ताँबे से मढ़ी हुई थीं। इनमें उच्च, मध्य और निम्न वर्गों के नागरिक अपनी श्रेणी के अनुसार वास करते थे।"

"हीनजाति" लोगों के "विनय" ग्रन्थ "महावग्ग" में राजगृह के व्यापारी के वैशाली-भ्रमण का किस्सा लिखा हुआ है। तब राज-गृह के राजा थे श्रेणिक बिम्बिसार। इस व्यापारी ने राजगृह में लौटकर राजा को वैशाली का वृत्तान्त बतलाया। वह देख गया था वैशाली में असंख्य जनता की रहनसहन, उसके नगरवासियों की भारी धनदौलत, और खाने-पीने की चीजों की प्रचुरता। और उसने देखे सात हजार सात मंजिल वाले मकान, खुशी की हिलोर से भरपूर। उसने वैशाली की एक और प्रधान चीज का वर्णन किया। यह थी उस नगर की सुप्रसिद्ध वेश्या 'अम्बपाली'——जो बहुत धनदौलत की मालकिन थी और जिसने उस शहर में ऐसे बहुत से जनहितकार्य किये थे, जिनको देखने के वास्ते बिभिन्न देशों के लोग वहाँ जाते थे।

राजनीति-तन्त्र में वैशाली की महत्ता एक बहुत ही प्राचीन घटना में वर्णित है। वह घटना बौद्ध कहानी 'भद्दसाल जातक' में लिखी हुई है। उससे मालूम होता है कि वैशाली के प्रत्येक राजा को राजतिलकोत्सव के समय नहाने के लिए वहाँ के एक तालाब के पानी की जरूरत पड़ती थी। यह पानी नहीं होने से राजाओं का 'अभिषेक पर्व' सम्पूर्ण नहीं माना जाता था। इस पानी को लिच्छवि राजाओं

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के अतिरिक्त दूसरा कोई छू भी न सकता था। उसकी रक्षा के लिए कड़ा पहरा पड़ता था। ऊपर लोहे की जाली लगी थी, जिससे उड़ते पक्षी तक उसमें चोंच न डुबो सकते थे। एक बार श्रावस्ती के राजसेनापति बन्धुल की स्त्री मल्लिका ने अपनी गर्भावस्था में यह इच्छा प्रकट की कि मैं वैशाली नगर की अभिषेक-मङ्गल-पुष्करिणी के अन्दर नहाकर उसका पानी पीऊँगी।

वेसालीनगरे गनराजकुलानाम् अभिषेक मङ्गलपोक्खरनीम्
ओतरित्वा नहात्ता पानीयम् पातुकम् अंहिस्रामीति।
—जातक, ४, पृ० १४८

सेनापति अपनी स्त्री को रथ पर चढ़ा कर एक हजार तीरन्दाज फौज के साथ बहुत ही हल्ला मचाकर नगर के द्वार पर उपस्थित हुआ। वैशाली नगर के रक्षा करने वाले सिपाहियों ने उसे नगर-प्रवेश के लिए मना किया और अन्त में लड़ाई की, जिसमें वे मर गये। बन्धुल मल्ल ने जाली को छेद कर अपनी स्त्री के साथ पोखर में स्नान किया और जी भर पानी पीकर लौट गया।

इस मङ्गलपुष्करिणी को छोड़ कर वैशाली में और भी बहुत सी देखने लायक चीजें थीं, यथा अगणित चैत्यगृह या पूजास्थान। इनमें अधिक मशहूर थे—'उदेन चैत्य', 'गोतमक चैत्य', 'सत्तम्बक चैत्य', 'बहुपुत्तक चैत्य', 'सारन्दद चैत्य', 'चापाल चैत्य', 'कपिनह्य चैत्य', 'मर्कटह्रदतीर चैत्य' और 'मुकुटबन्धन चैत्य'। ये सब चैत्य ज्यादातर यक्ष देवताओं की पूजा के मन्दिर थे। एक-एक मन्दिर की अलग-अलग कहानियाँ थीं। उदाहरणार्थ 'मुकुटबन्धन चैत्य' में राजाओं और जनसभा के प्रधान का अभिषेक वा पट्टबन्धन उत्सव मनाया जाता था।

एक दिन बुद्धदेव ने 'चापाल चैत्य' में बैठ कर अपने प्रिय शिष्य आनन्द से कहा था—'कितनी रमणीय है आनन्द! यह वैशाली। कितने सुन्दर और मन को हरने वाले हैं ये चैत्य—'उदेन चैत्य', 'गोतमक चैत्य', 'सत्तम्बक चैत्य', 'बहुपुत्त चैत्य', 'सारन्दद चैत्य' और 'चापाल चैत्य'। जब तक वज्जि अपनी भक्ति और श्रद्धा अटूट रख कर इन वज्जि-चैत्यों की पूजा-अर्चना पर कायम रहेंगे और इनकी रक्षा में तत्पर रहेंगे, तब तक उनकी तरक्की ही होगी, हानि नहीं।"

परन्तु प्राचीन वैशाली नगरी की सबसे बड़ी विशेषता यह थी कि यह थी सुप्रसिद्ध 'अष्टगण' या 'अट्ठकुल' की प्रधान राजधानी। इस अट्ठकुल के अन्दर प्रधान वंश थे 'विदेहगण', 'वज्जिगण' और इतिहासविख्यात 'लिच्छवि-वंश'।

इस लिच्छवि-वंश की उत्पत्ति के सम्बन्ध में विद्वानों में मतभेद है। डा० विन्सेण्ट आर्थर स्मिथ के मतानुसार लिच्छवि लोग थे मंगोल जाति की एक शाखा—तिब्बती और हिमालयवासी जातियों के रिश्तेदार। डा० सतीशचन्द्र विद्याभूषण उन्हें पारसवंशीय मानते थे। बील ने उन्हें 'यूची' खानदान का माना है। धर्मशास्त्र के महान् नेता भगवान् मनु ने लिच्छवियों को 'व्रात्य क्षत्रिय' कहा है, क्योंकि लिच्छवियों को धर्मशास्त्रानुमोदित समय पर अपने व्रत-संस्कार करने की परवाह नहीं थी। आधुनिक भारतीय विद्वान् लिच्छवियों को आर्य मानते हैं।

लिच्छवियों की नसल कुछ भी हो, उन लोगों का राजनीति-तन्त्र गणतन्त्र या प्रजातन्त्र था। उन लोगों का शासनतन्त्र कुछ निर्वाचित प्रधान सदस्यों के हाथ में था। ये प्रधान सदस्य 'वोट' द्वारा निर्वाचित होते थे। शासन-सभा का सभापति, जो 'महोत्तरक' कहलाता था, निर्वाचित होता था। जैनधर्म के ऐतिहासिक वर्णन से मालूम होता है कि मगध के राजा बिम्बिसार के लड़के अजातशत्रु की माता 'चेल्लना' लिच्छवि-वंश के चेटक की कन्या थी। यही चेटक उस समय की वैशाली-शासन-सभा का सभापति था। महावीर की माता त्रिशला भी इसी की बहन थीं।

अजातशत्रु के समय में वैशाली मगध के अधीन हो गयी। बात ऐसी हुई कि गंगा नदी के तीर पर एक बन्दरगाह पर लिच्छवियों और मगधराज में झगड़ा हुआ। इस नदी के घाट का एक हिस्सा था लिच्छवियों के कब्जे में और दूसरा था मगधराज के कब्जे में। इस बन्दरगाह-सम्बन्धी झगड़े के होने पर अजातशत्रु ने पहले अपने मन्त्री वर्षकार को भेज वैशाली में फूट डलवायी और पीछे विशाल फौज भेज कर उसे अपने कब्जे में कर लिया। इस प्रकार वह अपनी मातामही के राज का मालिक बन गया।

बौद्धधर्म के इतिहास और विभिन्न कहानियों में लिच्छवि-वंश के बहुत विशिष्ट और श्रेष्ठ लोगों का पता चलता है। उनमें कई नाम बहुत मशहूर हैं, यथा महालि, महानाम, सेनापति सिंह, गोश्रृङ्गी, और भद्द।

लिच्छवि गणतन्त्र के सेनापति सिंह पहले जैन थे; बाद में उन्होंने बौद्धधर्म ग्रहण कर लिया था।

वैशाली नगर के उत्तर-पूर्व की तरफ 'महावन' या 'शालवन' नामक एक आश्रम था। उस आश्रम के अधिपति 'गोश्रृङ्गी' ने बुद्धदेव को उसका दान किया था। इस आश्रम में एक दोमंजिला 'कूटागारशाला' बनवायी गयी और बुद्धदेव अक्सर इस कूटागारशाला में आकर रहते थे।

एक और बड़ा दान बौद्धधर्म के इतिहास में प्रसिद्ध हुआ है। यह है सुप्रसिद्ध वेश्या अम्बपाली का सुविख्यात 'आम्रकानन'—वैशाली नगर के बिलकुल पास में स्थित। एक दिन अम्बपाली ने भगवान् बुद्ध और उनके सारे शिष्यों को अपने मकान में निमन्त्रित करके भोजन करा दक्षिणा के रूप में यह 'आम्रकानन' भेंट किया।

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लिच्छवि देश का एक मशहूर व्यक्ति था लिच्छवि भद्र। उसका नाम प्राचीन बौद्धग्रन्थ "चुल्लवग्ग" में मिलता है। किसी अपराध में लिच्छवि भद्र महाशय का सम्बन्ध बौद्धसंघ से खतम हो गया। मगर बाद में उस बौद्धसंघ ने भद्र महाशय को फिर अपना लिया था।

इस पुनर्मिलन के समय हमलोग भगवान् बुद्धदेव के वचन में एक सामाजिक प्रथा का उल्लेख पाते हैं। किसी सभ्य को बिरादरी से निकाल देने के समय भोजन पर बैठा कर पानी के बर्तन को उलट देने की प्रथा थी। बुद्धदेव ने संघ को सम्बोधित करके कहा था—"ऐ सदस्यगण! आइए, हमलोग लिच्छवि भद्र महाशय के साथ स्नेह का व्यवहार पुनः स्थापित करके उलटे हुए पानी के बर्तन को एक बार फिर सीधा करके बैठा दें और भद्र महाशय को पुनः अपने दोस्त के रूप में अपना लें।"

मगर वैशाली नगर को बौद्धधर्म के इतिहास में एक विशेष कारण से महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान मिला था। वह कारण यह था कि बुद्धदेव के जीवन की बहुत सी विशिष्ट घटनाएँ इस वैशाली नगर में गुजरी थीं। बुद्धदेव के बार-बार आगमन के कारण वैशाली नगर के प्रत्येक भाग की धूलि उनके पदार्पण और पदचिह्न से पवित्र और महिमान्वित हो उठी थी।

सम्बोधिलाभ के तीन साल के बाद पावस ऋतु में भगवान् बुद्ध राजगृह के बीच वेणुवन के आश्रम की बैठक में थे। इस समय में वैशाली नगर में महामारी का प्रकोप हुआ। उस समय लिच्छवि-शासन-सभा के सभापति और महोत्तरक थे महापण्डित तोमरदेव। जन-सभा ने तोमरदेव को एक दूत के रूप में बुद्धदेव के पास विपत्ति में सहायता के लिए भेजा। बुद्धदेव ने कहा कि मैं राजा बिम्बिसार की अनुमति के बिना वैशाली की जनता का आवेदन ग्रहण नहीं कर सकता। राजा बिम्बिसार ने इजाजत दी। उन्होंने अपनी फौज के साथ शोभायात्रा करके बुद्धदेव को वैशाली के रास्ते पर गंगा के किनारे तक पहुँचा दिया। इस शोभायात्रा का सुन्दर वर्णन प्राचीन बौद्धग्रन्थ "महा-वस्तु" में मिलता है। इसी प्रकार नदी के उस पार भी उसी प्रकार फौज और चमकदमक के साथ वैशाली के राजवंश के लोग सपरिवार बुद्धदेव का स्वागत करने के लिए अजीब ठाट-बाट से उपस्थित हुए। उनके हरेक दल का साजो सामान था एक खास रंग का। एक दल पहन कर आया था नीले रंग का साजपाट और दूसरा दल आया लाल रंग के ठाठ-बाट से। महावस्तु में इसका वर्णन चिरस्मरणीय अक्षरों में लिखा हुआ है। उसीमें एक झुण्ड आया पीले रंग के रथ पर, पीले रंग के घोड़े लगा कर, पीले रंग की पगड़ी पहन कर, पीले रंग के लोहे के बख्तर पहन कर, और पीले रंग के कपड़े और अलंकारों से सुशोभित होकर—

"संत्यत्र लिच्छवयः पीतास्या पीतरथा पीतरश्मि-प्रत्योद-यष्टि।
पीतवस्त्रा, पीतालंकारा, पीतोष्णीशा, पीतछत्राः, पीतखड्ग-मुनिपादुका॥"

तत्रेन्मुच्येतः —

पीतास्या, पीतरथा, पीतरश्मि, प्रत्योदमुष्णीशा।
पीता च पंचककुदा पीता वस्त्रा अलंकारा॥

और एक दल आया—सारी नीली चीजों से सजधज कर—

नीलास्या, नीलरथा, नीलरश्मि प्रत्योदमुष्णीशा।
नीला च पंचककुदा नीला वस्त्रा अलंकाराः॥

इस तरीके के समारोह से स्वागत किये जाने पर भगवान् बुद्धदेव वैशाली नगर में पदार्पण करते हैं और महामारी शान्त हो जाती है।

नगर में प्रवेश करके भगवान् बुद्ध ने बौद्ध साहित्य के सुप्रसिद्ध 'रतनसुत्त' का मुक्तकण्ठ से उच्चारण किया। इस वाणी को सुन कर समस्त जनसमुदाय बौद्धधर्म को मान गया और इस सिलसिले में लिच्छवि खानदान के गोशृङ्गी ने अपना मशहूर 'शालवन' बौद्धसंघ को भेंट किया।

बौद्धधर्म के इतिहास की एक और खास घटना वैशाली नगर में हुई थी। वह थी स्त्रियों को संघ में प्रवेश करने की अनुमति और 'भिक्षुणी-संघ' की स्थापना। इसके पहले जब बुद्धदेव राजगृह 'बटवन' की बैठक में थे, तब उनकी धातृमाता गौतमी ने गृहस्थ-आश्रम छोड़ कर संघ में प्रवेश करने की इजाजत माँगी थी। परन्तु उस समय बुद्धदेव ने माता की उस प्रार्थना को ठुकरा दिया था। इसके बाद बुद्धदेव वैशाली चले आये। मगर गौतमी अपनी माँग को लेकर फिर उपस्थित हुई। केशों को मुड़ा कर, भगवा वस्त्र पहन कर, बहुत सी महिलाओं को साथ में लेकर, राजगृह से पैदल चल कर, गर्द से ढके हुए मलीन और फूले हुए पैर के साथ, सूखा मुँह लेकर, आँखों में आँसू को भरे हुए, वह वैशाली के महावन की कूटागारशाला के द्वार पर खड़ी हुई। वहाँ उसे बुद्धदेव के प्रधान शिष्य आनन्द मिले। गौतमी ने आनन्द से कहा कि बुद्धदेव से हमारी प्रार्थना और माँग मंजूर करा दीजिए। आनन्द की सिफारिश के कारण बुद्धदेव ने अनुमति दे दी; मगर आठ कठिन शर्तों का पालन करने के लिए आदेश किया। गौतमी आनन्दपूर्वक इन सारे आदेशों को मंजूर करते हुए बोली—"हे आनन्द! जैसे थोड़ी उम्र के युवक-युवती अपने को सुसज्जित करने के लिए सर्वदा तत्पर रहते हैं और स्नान करके उठते ही, दोनों हाथों में कमल, चमेली और 'अतिमुत्त' फूलों की मालाओं को उल्लास और खुशी से लेकर सिर पर अलंकार की रचना करते हैं; मैं उसी प्रेरणा, उत्साह, उल्लास और खुशी के साथ बुद्ध भगवान् की इन आठ शर्तों को मंजूर करती हूँ। मेरे जीवन में इन शर्तों की कभी भी अवहेलना नहीं होगी।"

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इस तरीके से वैशाली नगर में भिक्षुणी-संघ की स्थापना हुई।

इस अवसर पर बुद्ध भगवान् ने भविष्यवाणी की थी—"हे आनन्द ! अगर नारी जाति को गृहस्थाश्रम त्याग करके संन्यास-आश्रम में प्रवेश करने की आज्ञा न दी जाती, तो तथागत द्वारा प्रतिष्ठित पवित्र धर्म एक हजार वर्ष कायम रहता। मगर चूँकि स्त्रीजाति को संघ में प्रवेश करने की आज्ञा दी गयी है, इस कारण से हमारा यह पवित्र धर्म अब केवल पाँच सौ वर्ष ही जीवित रहेगा।"

कुछ जमाने के बाद बुद्धदेव समझ गये कि उनकी अस्सी वर्ष की उम्र का अन्तिम काल आ गया है। एक दिन उन्होंने आनन्द को साथ में लेकर चापाल चैत्य में बैठक की और यहीं पर अपने निर्वाण-मुहूर्त की भविष्य-वाणी की। बौद्धधर्म के शैतान—मार— को सम्बोधित करके उन्होंने कहा—"ऐ मार ! शान्त हो। आज से तीन महीने के अन्दर ही मैं अपना निर्वाण-लाभ स्वयं ही करूँगा।"

आनन्द को यह संवाद देने के बाद भगवान् बुद्ध ने वैशाली नगर को छोड़ कर कुशीनारा की यात्रा की।

यात्रा आरम्भ करने के पहले एक स्थान पर खड़े होकर बुद्ध ने वैशाली की ओर अन्तिम दृष्टिपात किया और आनन्द से कहा—"हे आनन्द ! मेरा यह अन्तिम वैशाली-दर्शन है, चूँकि मैं अब वैशाली फिर नहीं लौटूँगा।"

"भगवान् वैशालीवनं अविशरण दक्षिणेन
सर्वकार्येन नामावलोकितेन व्यवलोकयति।
इदं आनन्द तथागतस्य अपश्चिमं वैशालीदर्शनम्।
न भूयो आनन्द तथागतो वैशाली आगमिष्यति॥"

भगवान् बुद्ध के ये वचन वैशाली नगर की गली-गली में बिजली की तरह फैल गये, और उस समय इस ढंग की एक गाथा भी तैयार हो गयी—

"इदं अपश्चिमं नाथ वैशाल्यास्तव दर्शनम्।
न भूयो सुगतो बुद्धो वैशालीं आगमिष्यति॥"

जिस स्थान पर खड़े होकर महात्मा बुद्ध ने वैशाली की ओर आखिरी दृष्टिपात किया था, उस स्थान पर वैशाली के नगरनिवासियों ने एक स्तूप का निर्माण करके इस घटना को स्मरणीय बनाने की कोशिश की। सातवीं शताब्दी में जब चीन का परिव्राजक ह्वेनसांग वैशाली में आया था, तब उसने उस स्तूप को देखा था।

बुद्धदेव जब कुशीनारा के रास्ते पर आगे बढ़े, उस समय वैशाली नगर के भक्त लिच्छवियों ने उनका अनुसरण करना चाहा। बुद्धदेव के मना करने के बाद भी उन्होंने नहीं माना। तब बुद्धदेव ने तुरत अपनी माया के बल से एक विशाल नदी की सृष्टि की, जिसका किनारा बहुत ऊँचा था और जिसमें भयंकर लहरें उठ रही थीं। इस कारण वे लोग आगे नहीं बढ़ सके। तब बुद्धदेव ने उन लोगों पर कृपा करके उनको अपने पिण्डपात्र का दान किया। उन लोगों ने उस पिण्डपात्र की कहानी को एक शिलास्तम्भ पर लिख कर हमेशा के लिए उस स्मृति को कायम रखा। फाहियान ने उस स्मृतिस्तम्भ को देखा था। कनिष्क राजा ने जब उत्तर भारत में अपना साम्राज्य स्थापित किया, तब उसने अपनी राजधानी पेशावर में इस वैशाली के पिण्डपात्र को मँगा लिया। फाहियान ने गान्धार में बुद्ध का पिण्डपात्र देखा था।

लिच्छवियों को लौटा देने के बाद बुद्धदेव ने कुशीनारा में निर्वाण-लाभ किया।

मगर उनके निर्वाण-लाभ के बाद भी वैशाली ने बौद्ध इतिहास में बहुत से नये पन्ने जोड़ दिये हैं।

बुद्धदेव के शरीर की भस्म को लेकर राजाओं में बहुत लड़ाई हुई। अन्त में सभी को उस राख का थोड़ा-थोड़ा हिस्सा मिला। लिच्छवियों को भी थोड़ा सा हिस्सा मिला। उसके ऊपर लिच्छवियों ने वैशाली में बुद्धदेव के 'शरीर-स्तूप' का निर्माण किया था।

इसी प्रकार आनन्द ने जब देहत्याग किया, तब उनके शरीर का एक हिस्सा जाकर वैशाली में गिरा और दूसरा हिस्सा राजगृह में गिरा। लिच्छवि लोगों ने आनन्द का भी 'शरीर-स्तूप' वैशाली में बनाया।

बुद्ध-निर्वाण के एक सौ वर्ष बाद वैशाली में बौद्ध-संघ की प्रसिद्ध द्वितीय संगीति हुई। इस सभा में भारत के विभिन्न स्थानों से बौद्ध भिक्षुकों के करीब सात सौ प्रतिनिधि सम्मिलित हुए थे। इस विचार-सभा की जरूरत इसलिए हुई थी कि वैशाली के भिक्षुकों ने धर्म-साधना और विनय के नियम-कानून में दस नयी विधियों को लागू करने की कोशिश की। यह नयी विधि कुछ इस प्रकार थी—

(१) भिक्षु लोग निमन्त्रण में जाने के समय सींग के अन्दर नमक रख कर ले जा सकते हैं या नहीं। (२) दिन-दोपहर के दो घड़ी बाद भिक्षुक लोग भोजन कर सकते हैं या नहीं। (३) भोजन के बाद गाँव में जाने पर यदि वहाँ भोजन करने का निमन्त्रण मिले, तो फिर खा सकते हैं या नहीं। (४) बिना झालर का आसन और दरी इस्तमाल कर सकते हैं या नहीं। (५) सोना-चाँदी दान के रूप में ले सकते हैं या नहीं।

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बहुत से गण्यमान्य भिक्षुक और स्थविर इस वितर्क-सभा में सम्मिलित हुए। उनमें प्रधान थे—स्थविर रेवत, स्थविर सम्भूत और स्थविर यश। सब लोगों ने बहुत विचार करके इन दस विधियों के विरुद्ध अपनी राय दी। वैशाली के भिक्षुकों की यह नयी विधि चालू नहीं हुई।

वैशाली के भिक्षुकगण तर्कशास्त्र में बहुत प्रवीण थे और अनेक लोग उनसे तर्क में परास्त हो जाते थे। आर्य नागार्जुन और उनके मशहूर शिष्य आर्य भिक्षुदेव के साथ बातचीत में इसका हमें प्रमाण मिलता है। एक बार वैशाली के भिक्षुकों की विचार-सभा में निमन्त्रण पाकर भिक्षुदेव वैशाली जाने के लिए तैयार हुए। तब नागार्जुन ने उनको सम्बोधित करके कहा—"हे देव ! वैशाली के नवीन पंथी भिक्षुक तर्कशास्त्र में बहुत ही चतुर हैं। तुम उनके मुकाबिले नहीं हो। इसलिए मुझको ही स्वयं जाना होगा।"

इसके बाद वैशाली फिर इतिहास के पन्नों में सन् ३०८ ई० में चमक उठी, जब पाटलिपुत्र के गुप्तवंश के राजा चन्द्रगुप्त ने लिच्छवि वंश की राजकुमारी कुमारदेवी का पाणिग्रहण किया। इस वक्त गुप्तवंश के मामूली राजाओं से बहुत ज्यादा असरदार और हिम्मत वाले थे वैशाली के लिच्छवि। इस विवाह का राजनीतिक प्रभाव गुप्तराज्य के प्रचलित सिक्कों में कुमारदेवी और चन्द्रगुप्त के अंकित नामों और खड़ी हुई तस्वीरों से भली भाँति मालूम होता है। इन सिक्कों को यादगार के रूप में इस्तमाल किया गया है। इस विवाह-सम्बन्ध के कारण चन्द्रगुप्त को वीर लिच्छवि जाति का सैनिक बल हाथ लगा। इसमें जरा भी सन्देह नहीं कि लिच्छवियों की सहायता से लाभ उठा कर चन्द्रगुप्त ने, मगध सूबे से शक क्षत्रप को निकाल कर, गुप्तसाम्राज्य की स्थापना की। गुप्तवंश का सबसे प्रतापी सम्राट् समुद्रगुप्त उसी लिच्छविकुमारी कुमारदेवी का पुत्र था। वह लिच्छविदौहित्र होने का अभिमान करता है। कौन कह सकता है, उसको अपनी दिग्विजयों में अपने मामा के वंश से कितनी सहायता मिली होगी।

३२० ई० से ५३५ ई० तक गुप्तसाम्राज्य के बीच वैशाली का इतिहास चमकता रहा। इस काल की करीब पाँच सौ चिट्ठी मोड़ने की मिट्टी की सील-मोहरों से हमको मालूम होता है कि वैशाली में व्यापार की बहुत तरक्की हुई थी; क्योंकि इन सील-मोहरों में अनेक श्रेष्ठियों, व्यापारियों और कारबारी आदमियों के नाम मिलते हैं।

वैशाली में प्राप्त सीलों के कुछ चुने हुए उदाहरण ये हैं :—

(१) महाराजाधिराजश्रीचन्द्रगुप्तपत्नी महाराजश्रीगोविन्दगुप्तमाता महादेवी श्रीध्रुवस्वामिनी।
(२) श्रीघटोत्कचगुप्तस्य।
(३) कुमारामात्याधिकरणस्य।
(४) श्रेष्ठि-सार्थवाह-कुलिक-निगम।
(५) युवराजभट्टारकपादीय बलाधिकरणस्य।
(६) श्रीरणभाण्डागाराधिकरणस्य।
(७) दण्डपाशाधिकरणस्य।
(८) तीरभुक्त्युपरिकाधिकरणस्य।
(९) तीरभुक्तौ विनयस्थितिस्थाप(क)धिकरण(स्य)।
(१०) तीरकुमारामात्याधिकरण(स्य)।
(११) (वै)शाल्यधिष्ठानाधिकरण।
(१२) श्रेष्ठि-कुलिक-निगम।
(१३) गोमिकपुत्रस्य श्रेष्ठिकुलोटस्य।
(१४) श्रेष्ठिश्रीदासस्य।

वस्तुतः गुप्तकालीन वैशाली व्यापार और सम्पत्ति का केन्द्र थी।

मगर शीघ्र ही वाणिज्य और लक्ष्मी के इस आवास पर कुठाराघात हुआ। पाँचवीं सदी के अन्त में दुष्ट, नीच और बर्बर हूणों ने भारतवर्ष पर हमला किया। अतएव जब ६३५ ई० में चीनी परिव्राजक ह्वेनसांग वैशाली आया, तब उसे नष्ट कीर्ति के अवशिष्ट चिह्न ही देखने को मिले। उस समय तक वैशाली का गर्वयुक्त और उज्ज्वल अमर इतिहास-सूर्य डूब चुका था।

तब भी कुछ और शताब्दियों तक वैशाली ने किसी तरीके से इतिहास में अपना अस्तित्व बनाये रखा और कई एक बौद्ध भक्तों ने तब भी वैशाली के बौद्ध-धर्म-प्रेम को जीवित रखा। इसका प्रमाण हम बारहवीं शताब्दी की लिखी हुई एक बौद्ध 'प्रज्ञापारमिता' की पोथी में पाते हैं। उस काल में जहाँ-तहाँ बौद्ध तारादेवी के मन्दिर थे, उनकी एक सचित्र फिहरिस्त में हमलोगों को वैशाली में पूजा पाने वाली एक तारा-मूर्ति का नाम मिलता है—"तीरभुक्तौ वैशालीतारा" अर्थात् तीरभुक्ति जिले के वैशाली शहर में तारादेवी का एक मन्दिर है। उस युग में वैशाली के जिले का नाम था तीरभुक्ति या तिरहुत।

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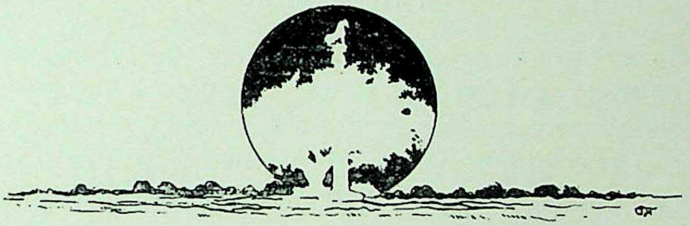
उस काल की एक और चीज मिली है। वह है बुद्ध-प्रतिमा की पाद-पीठ पर खुदा हुआ एक शिलालेख—

"....देयधर्मोऽयम् प्रवरमहायानयायिनः करणिकोच्छाहः माणिक्यसुतस्य...."

—इस मूर्ति का, एक महायानपंथी भक्त ने, जो माणिक्य का लड़का और उत्साह-नामधारी था और जिसका पेशा मुंशीगिरी था, धर्मपूर्वक दान किया।

यह हुआ एक संक्षिप्त दृष्टि से वैशाली नगर के इतिहास का परिचय, जिस नगर ने अपने पूर्वयुग में उत्तमोत्तम कर्मों की महिमा से इतिहास के पन्नों को उज्ज्वल कर रखा है, जो नगर अपने अनेक कीर्तिस्तम्भों से एवं बुद्धदेव और उनकी शिष्यमण्डली के पदचिह्नों के कारण बार बार जगमगा उठा है, जिस नगर में बुद्धदेव की परमभक्त-मण्डली लिच्छवि जाति ने बौद्धधर्म के भण्डार को पूरा किया है और जिस नगर को भगवान् तीर्थङ्कर महावीर की जन्मभूमि होने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त है।



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आज के भारत के लिए वैशाली का सन्देश[1]

श्री जयचन्द्र विद्यालंकार

यह धरती जिस पर आज हम खड़े हैं एक उज्ज्वल अतीत की स्मृतियों से घिरी है। इसने मानव को सामूहिक जीवन के उच्चतम रूप का विकास करते और अपनी गरिमा की चरम सीमा तक चढ़ते देखा है; जो कि शासनतन्त्र के एक सुव्यवस्थित लोकसत्तात्मक रूप के नीचे ही सम्भव है जहाँ हर मनुष्य दूसरे का समकक्ष समझा जाता हो। किसी आधुनिक यूरोपीय साम्राज्यकामी प्रचारक ने भारतवासियों को "देवताओं का गुलाम" कह कर पुकारा है। भारतवासी आज विदेशियों के गुलाम हैं, यह तो एक मोटा तथ्य है, और कि वे अपनी मनोदशा से देवताओं के गुलाम हैं, यह भी आंशिक रूप से सच हो सकता है। पर भगवान् बुद्ध के समय के भारतीय देवताओं के समकक्ष या कभी-कभी उनसे ऊँचे समझे जाते थे। बुद्ध और उनके भिक्षु मनुष्यों के साथ-साथ देवताओं को भी उपदेश देते थे, जो उनके पास श्रद्धा-पूर्वक आते। और वैशाली के नागरिक बुद्ध को अपनी चाल-ढाल में बिलकुल देवताओं के से ही प्रतीत हुए। एक बार नगर से गुजरते हुए उन्होंने अपने भिक्षुओं से कहा था कि उनमें से जिन्होंने देवताओं की परिषद् न देखी हो, वे वैशाली के लिच्छवियों की परिषद् को देखें और उस पर से कल्पना करें कि देवताओं की परिषद् कैसी दीखती होगी।

ईसापूर्व की छठी शताब्दी में उत्तर विहार के लोगों के उस अवतरण की तुलनामें उनका १९वीं सदी का उतार मानों स्वर्ग से नरक में हुआ हो; १९वीं सदी भारत के इतिहास में सबसे अँधियारा युग था; जब कि उसके युग और युगियों से घर और बाहर सर्वत्र ढोरों-डंगरों का सा व्यवहार होता रहा। भारतीय शर्तबन्द कुलियों के एक अंगरेज इतिहास लेखक ने उस सदी में यह लेख आंका है कि एक स्वतन्त्र हिन्दुस्तानी एक हबशी गुलाम के बनिस्बत सस्ता जिन्स था। पतन और गिरावट की वह अवस्था निस्सन्देह ऐतिहासिक परिस्थितियों के कारण आयी। और उसमें भी कोई सन्देह नहीं कि इसकी जड़ में है हमारी जनता की एक विशेष मनःस्थिति जिसे हमने प्रगतिहीनता और ह्रास की अनेक शताब्दियों के बीच विकसित किया। विदेशी साम्राज्यशाही के प्रचारकों ने इस स्थिति पर भरसक बल देने और उसे सही बनाए रखने का जतन किया है। उन्होंने ऐसी स्थापनाएँ कीं और उन्हें नौजवान हिन्दुस्तानियों के दिल में पैठाने का जतन किया, जैसे कि उदाहरणार्थ कहा गया कि भारत का जलवायु दुर्बलताकारी है, कि भारतीय समुद्रतट नौशक्तियों के विकास के योग्य नहीं, अथवा कि भारतीय लोगों की जातिगत बनावट ही ऐसी थी कि वे यूरोपवालों से हीन हों। दूसरों ने कहा भारतीय, अथवा यों कहना चाहिए कि सभी पूर्वी लोग सदा से निरंकुशतापूर्वक शासित हुए हैं और कि लोकसत्ता फली-फूली है और फल-फूल सकती है सिर्फ यूरोप के जलवायु में और यूरोपीय लोगों के बीच। इस तरह की स्थापनाएँ १९वीं सदी में बहुतायत से प्रचलित थीं और आम तौर से सच मान ली गयी थीं; पर वर्तमान शतक के आरम्भ में श्रीकाशीप्रसाद जायसवाल जैसे भारत के सपूत उनके विरुद्ध उठ खड़े हुए और उन्होंने घोषित किया कि गण-तन्त्रीय और लोकसत्तापरक परम्पराएँ भारत की मिट्टी में भी ठीक जमती हैं और भारतीय इतिहास में सुपरिचित हैं। जायसवालजी ने साहित्य से और पुरातत्त्व की सामग्री से निर्णयकारी ढंग पर यह प्रमाणित कर दिया कि जनतन्त्र प्राचीन भारत में प्राचीन यूरोप की अपेक्षा अधिक लम्बे काल तक और अधिक विस्तृत क्षेत्रों में फलते-फूलते रहे और कि हिन्दू-धर्म-शास्त्र का उदय जनता की परिषदों की व्यवस्थाओं द्वारा हुआ। जायसवालजी की अनेकों स्थापनाओं पर, उदाहरणार्थ उनकी इस स्थापना पर कि भारत के प्रत्येक जनपद में एक सार्वजनिक (जनपद) परिषद् होती थी, उस समय काफी विवाद उठाया गया। अब, उनकी मृत्यु के बाद, पुरातत्त्व की ताजा उपलब्धियों ने, उन्हें निर्णयकारी रूप में प्रमाणित कर दिया है।

[1] द्वितीय वैशाली-महोत्सव (१० अप्रैल, १९४६) में सभापति के पद से दिया गया भाषण।

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प्राचीन भारत के उन लोकतन्त्रों में से एक सबसे पुराना और सबसे अधिक ज्ञात नमूना था वृजि जनपद का, जिसकी राजधानी वैशाली में थी। उन लोगों को, जो अब कहते हैं कि भारतीय सदा निरंकुशतापूर्वक शासित होते रहे, हमारा जवाब है वैशाली। और हमारी वर्तमान निराशा में भविष्य की आशा वैशाली के आदर्श के पुनरावर्तन में है।

वह आदर्श क्या है ? वह है हर व्यक्ति को इस बात की पूरी समझ का होना कि उसका क्षेम-कुशल निर्भर है समाज के योग-क्षेम पर और इस समझ से अनुप्राप्त कर्तव्यों को दृढ़तापूर्वक निभाना। इसका स्वाभाविक परिणाम होगा एक स्वस्थ, सहज, सामूहिक जीवन का पनपना; वैसा जीवन जैसा कि प्राचीन वृजि देश में पनपता था, जिसकी झांकी हम बुद्ध के अन्तिम प्रवचनों में से एक में पाते हैं। मगध का राजा अजातशत्रु, जिसकी राजधानी राजगृह में थी, वृजिसंघ पर आक्रमण करना और उसे अपने अधीन करना चाहता था। उसने अपने अमात्य वर्षकार को बुद्ध के पास टोह लेने और प्रस्तावित आक्रमण के विषय में उनकी सम्मति जानने को भेजा, जो तब अपने मगध के अन्तिम वर्षावास के समय राजगृह के पास गृद्ध्रकूट शिखर पर ठहरे थे। उनके उपस्थापक (Private Secretary) आनन्द ने जब बुद्ध के सामने इस विषय की चर्चा छेड़ी, तब उन्होंने आनन्द से सात प्रश्न किये और उनके उत्तर मिलने पर प्रत्येक बार अपना मत यों प्रकट किया कि वृजियों की वृद्धि (अभ्युदय) ही होगी और हानि (क्षय) न होगी। बुद्ध के कथन का सार संक्षेप में निम्नलिखित रूप से प्रकट किया जा सकता है :—

(१) जब तक वृजि अपनी परिषद् की बैठकें भरपूर रूप में और बार-बार करते हैं;
(२) जब तक वे मिलकर बैठते-उठते और अपने वृजिकार्यों (राष्ट्रीय कार्यों) को मिलकर करते हैं;
(३) जब तक वे उचित विधि (Procedure) के बिना कोई कानून जारी नहीं करते, विधिपूर्वक बनाये कानून का उल्लंघन कर कोई कार्य नहीं करते, और वृजियों की विधिपूर्वक बने कानून से स्थापित प्राचीन संस्थाओं के अनुकूल आचरण करते हैं;
(४) जब तक वे अपने वृद्धों और गुरुओं का सम्मान करते, आदर-सत्कार करते, उन्हें मानते-पूजते और उनकी सुनने लायक बातों को सुनते-मानते और तदनुकूल आचरण करते हैं;
(५) जब तक वे अपनी कुल-स्त्रियों और कुल-कुमारियों पर जोर-जबरदस्ती कर उन्हें नहीं रोकते या उन पर अत्याचार नहीं करते;
(६) जब तक वे अपने वृजि-चैत्यों (जातीय मन्दिरों और स्मारकों) का आदर-सत्कार और मान करते तथा उनको पहले से दी गयी धर्मानुकूल बलि (चढ़ावा-पुजापा आदि जो उन मन्दिरों और स्मारकों को बनाये रखने, उनकी मरम्मत आदि में खर्च होता था) का अपहरण नहीं करते, उसे नहीं छुड़ाते;
(७) जब तक वे अपने अर्हतों की शरण, रक्षा और पोषण का उचित प्रबन्ध करते हैं. . . .

तब तक वृजियों की वृद्धि ही समझनी चाहिए, हानि नहीं।

अमात्य वर्षकार और उसके राजा ने यह सुनकर समझ लिया कि वे सिर्फ सैनिक शक्ति से वृजियों को नहीं झुका सकते। इसका अभिप्राय यह हुआ कि किसी भी जाति को, जिसमें सामूहिक जीवन की स्वस्थ व बलवती धारा प्रवाहित होती हो, केवल बाहरी भौतिक शक्ति के दवाव से जीता नहीं जा सकता। बुद्ध के इस प्रवचन में "सत्त अपरिहाणि धम्म" अर्थात् हानि न होने देनेवाले सात धर्मों की व्याख्या बतलायी जाती है। उच्चतम श्रेणी के सामाजिक विचारों का इसमें समावेश किया गया है। और प्राचीन भारत के राजनीतिक चिन्तन का यह एक नमूना है।

राजा अजातशत्रु और उसका अमात्य दोनों चतुर आदमी थे। उन्होंने वृजियों में फूट के बीज बोने आरम्भ किये और इस प्रकार वे वृजिदेश को मगध-साम्राज्य में मिलाने में सफल हो गए। इसके बाद अनेक शताब्दियों तक वृजियों या लिच्छवियों का साम्राज्य में महत्त्व-पूर्ण स्थान रहा।

जहाँ उत्तर बिहार का वृजिसंघ तथा उसके पश्चिम हिमालय की तराई के मल्ल, शाक्य आदि के चरित्र उज्ज्वल होने पर भी वे अल्पकालिक थे, वहाँ भारत के दूसरे भागों में, विशेष कर पंजाब में, ऐसे संघराज्य भी थे जिन्होंने, उनसे बहुत अधिक मात्रा में बचे रहने की सामर्थ्य का परिचय दिया। पंजाब के मालव, क्षुद्रक, शिवि, यौधेय आदि संघराज्य अपने उदयकाल में वृजियों के समकालिक ही थे। वे कभी पूर्व से उठनेवाली साम्राज्य-निर्माण की एक लहर के नीचे आ जाते, तो कभी उत्तर-पश्चिम से उठे किसी आक्रमण के तूफान के झपेटे में फँस जाते। परन्तु उनका वह झुकना सदा अस्थायी होता, इन सबके बीच वे अपने सामूहिक चरित्र को बनाए रखते, अधीन करनेवाली शक्ति से मुकाबला करते और अन्त में उसे तोड़कर अपना सिर फिर ऊँचा उठा लेते। यह बात विशेषतः यौधेयों के बारे में थी, जिन्होंने आश्चर्यकारी जीवनी-शक्ति और बचे रहने की सामर्थ्य का प्रदर्शन किया। उनके एक हजार वर्ष के इतिहास का खाका साहित्यिक उल्लेखों और पुरातत्त्व-सम्बन्धी अवशेषों के आधार पर खींचा जा सकता है, जो अभिलेख, मुद्रा, सिक्कों और सिक्के बनाने के साँचों तथा वास्तु-भग्नावशेषों के रूप में पूर्व में भरतपुर और सहारनपुर से पच्छिम बहावलपुर तक एक विशाल क्षेत्र पर बिखरे हुए पाये जाते हैं। एक

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पंजाबी होने के नाते मुझे इस विरासत पर गर्व है; परन्तु पछतावा इस बात का है कि विहार में वैशाली की विरासत का ज्ञान आज जैसे फैल रहा है, उस विरासत का ज्ञान पंजाब की जनता और वहाँ के बुद्धिजीवी वर्ग तक अभी नहीं पहुँच पाया।

वैशाली, राजगृह और चम्पा (भागलपुर) के गौरवकाल में विहारियों ने आश्चर्यकारी साहसिक भावना का परिचय दिया था। उन्होंने अपनी ही नावों में बैठ समुद्रों को पार किया, बंगाल की खाड़ी से दक्षिणी चीनी समुद्र तक फैले विशाल प्रायद्वीप और सुमात्रा, जावा, बोर्नियो आदि द्वीपों को साफ किया, जो कि तब आरम्भिक जंगलों से ढके थे और जहाँ नवाश्म युग के पत्थर के औजारों का प्रयोग करनेवाली फिरकर शिकारी जातियों का निवास था। उन्होंने उन प्रदेशों में अपनी बस्तियाँ बसायीं। उनमें पूर्वी तट पर, जिसे आज हिन्दचीन कहते हैं, एक बस्ती का नाम उसी नाम के एक बिहारी नगर के नाम पर चम्पा कहाता था। इन आरम्भिक अवग्राहकों (भूखोजियों), नौसंचालकों और उपनिवेशकों के साहसपूर्ण कार्यों की अनेक मनोरंजक कहानियाँ हमारे साहित्य में सुरक्षित हैं और उन उपनिवेशों के पुरातत्त्वीय ध्वंसावशेषों की एक विशाल राशि नौजवान बिहारी बुद्धिजीवियों का ध्यान आकृष्ट होने की वाट जोह रही है।

उस प्राचीन युग के अपने पुरखों की तुलना में हम आज के भारतवासी बिलकुल भिन्न नस्ल के जान पड़ते हैं और इतिहास के ठोस प्रमाणों के अभाव में यह विश्वास करना भी आज कठिन होता कि ऐसा गौरवमय युग भी कभी रहा। परन्तु वह प्रमाण मौजूद है। सौभाग्य से हमारे इतिहास का सबसे अँधियारा युग बीत गया है और हम अब एक ऐसे युग में से गुजर रहे हैं, जो नवीन जागरण की प्रसव-वेदना का अनुभव कर रहा है। अपने अतीत के योग्य सिंहावलोकन को इस जागरण में एक महत्त्वपूर्ण प्रेरक शक्ति बनाना चाहिए। किन्हीं विशेष युगों में हमारी जाति के आरोहण और दूसरों में उसके अवरोहण के कारणों और परिस्थितियों की सच्ची समझ की माँग हमें इस जागरण की प्रक्रिया में आगे ले चलने को है। अपने अवनति-काल में हम अपनी वैशाली को, अपने वृजियों और अपने यौधेयों को, प्रायः भुला बैठे थे। हमारा अतीत अक्षरार्थों में खोदकर निकाला और पुनरुज्जीवित किया गया है और हमारे इतिहास का अक्षरशः पुनर्निर्माण हुआ है। और हमारे इतिहास का पुनर्निर्माण हमारे नवजागरण में एक सबसे अधिक महत्त्वपूर्ण तत्त्व और प्रेरक बल रहा है और रहना चाहिए। भविष्य में हमारी आशा वैशाली की भावना के पुनरावर्तन में ही है।

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वैशाली का प्रजातन्त्र[1]

महापण्डित राहुल सांकृत्यायन

वैशाली की यह भूमि कितनी पुनीत है, इसका इतिहास कितना गौरव-पूर्ण है, इसका स्मरण करते भी हृदय इतने भावों से भरा हुआ है, जिनके प्रगट करने के लिये वाणी असमर्थ है। आज २४२८ वर्ष हुए, जब कि वैशाली के संघ-राज्य, जनता के पंचायती राज्य, की ध्वजा अवनत हुई और तब से निरंकुश रजुल्ले सवा चौबीस सौ वर्षों तक स्वतन्त्रता की भूमि पर मनमानी करते रहे। दूसरों की तो बात क्या, खुद वैशालीवासी भी भूल गये, कि एक समय था, जब उनकी इस गंगा और मही (गंडक)-द्वारा सिंचित वज्जी-भूमि में किसी राजा का शासन नहीं था, जनता के ७७७७ प्रतिनिधि सारा राज-काज चलाते थे और न्याय का इतना ध्यान था, कि अपने समय और सर्वदा के अद्वितीय महामानव बुद्ध ने अपने मुख से उसकी प्रशंसा की थी। गंगा पार का रजुल्ला अजातशत्रु वज्जी की समृद्धि-भूमि को देखकर जीभ से पानी टपका रहा था और उसने एक-दो बार कोशिश भी की, किन्तु मुँहकी खानी पड़ी। इसके बारे में दीघनिकाय की अट्ठकथा में कहा है—"एक नदी के घाट के पास आधा योजन अजातशत्रु का राज्य था और आधा योजन लिच्छवियों का. . . .। वहाँ पर्वत के नीचे से बहुमूल्य सुगंधि माल उतरता था। . . . .अजातशत्रु 'आज जाऊँ कल जाऊँ' करता रहता, उधर एकराय एकमत लिच्छवि पहले जाकर सब (कर) ले लेते। अजातशत्रु पीछे जाता और इस समाचार को सुन कुपित हो लौट आता। वे दूसरे वर्ष भी वैसा ही करते। अजातशत्रु ने अत्यन्त कुपित हो सोचा 'गण (प्रजातंत्र) के साथ युद्ध करना कठिन है, उनका एक भी प्रहार विफल नहीं जाता। किसी बुद्धिमान् से मंत्रणा करना अच्छा होगा। और इसीके लिये उसने अपने महामात्य वर्षकार ब्राह्मण को बुद्ध के पास भेजा।"[2]

बुद्ध का गण-संस्था के प्रति अगाध प्रेम था और वैशाली के साथ और भी अधिक, इसीसे ४८३ ईसा-पूर्व वैशाख मास में जब उन्होंने अन्तिम बार वैशाली को छोड़ा, तो एक बार फिर उस वीतराग ने अपने सारे शरीर को घुमाकर (नागावलोकन करके) वैशाली को आँख भर कर देख अपने प्रिय शिष्य से कहा—"आनन्द! तथागत (बुद्ध) यह अन्तिम बार वैशाली का दर्शन कर रहा है"[3]। इसी वैशाली के प्रति उस दयामूर्ति के हृदयोद्गार थे—"आनन्द! रमणीय है वैशाली, रमणीय है उसका उदयन-चैत्य, गोतमक-चैत्य, सप्ताम्रक-चैत्य, बहुपुत्रक-चैत्य, सारंदद-चैत्य।" ये चारो चैत्य वैशाली नगरद्वार के बाहर क्रमशः पूर्व, दक्षिण, पच्छिम, उत्तर दिशाओं में देवस्थान तथा वनपुष्करिणीसहित रमणीय भूभाग थे। वैशालीवासी लिच्छवि भगवान् के दर्शन के लिये वैशाली नगरी से कुछ दूर दक्षिण में अवस्थित अम्बपाली-वन में पहुँचे। उन्हें देखकर बुद्ध ने कहा था—"देखो भिक्षुओ! लिच्छवियों की परिषद् को, देखो भिक्षुओ! लिच्छवियों की परिषद् को। भिक्षुओ! इस लिच्छवि-परिषद् को त्रायस्त्रिंश (देवताओं) की परिषद् समझो।"[4] त्रायस्त्रिंश इन्द्रलोक के देवता हैं। बुद्ध ने वैशालीवासियों की उपमा उनसे दी थी, यह प्रकट करता है, कि बुद्ध के भाव इस भूमि के निवासियों के प्रति कैसे थे।

वर्षकार को अजातशत्रु ने बुद्ध के पास भेजा था कि उनसे ऐसा कोई उपाय मालूम करें, जिसमें वज्जियों को आसानी से हराया जा सके। बुद्ध को कितना कटु लगा होगा यह प्रश्न, और इसीलिये उन्होंने वर्षकार को सीधे जवाब न दे पीछे खड़े हो पंखा झलते आनन्द से कहा—

"आनन्द! सुना है न कि वज्जी (१) बराबर सभा करके, बार बार सभा करके अपना काम करते हैं?"

"सुना है भगवान्! . . . ."

"आनन्द! जब तक वज्जी सभा, बार बार सभा करके काम करेंगे, तब तक वज्जियों की उन्नति होगी, हानि नहीं।"

इसी तरह बुद्ध ने वज्जियों की समृद्धि और स्वतन्त्रता की कुंजी सात बातों को एक-एक करके दोहराया: वैशाली के प्रजातन्त्री (१) सभा में बहुमत से निर्णय करके किसी काम को करते थे; (२) वह एकराय से काम करते, उठते-बैठते थे; (३) अवैधानिक,

[1] चतुर्थ वैशाली-महोत्सव (२१ अप्रैल, १९४८) में सभापति के पद से दिया गया भाषण।

[2] दीघनिकाय (महापरिनिब्बाणसुत्त) अट्ठकथा

[3] वहीं।

[4] दीघनिकाय-महापरिनिब्बाणसुत्त (पृष्ठ १३३)

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वज्जिधर्म (वैशाली के कानून)-विरुद्ध कोई काम नहीं करते थे; (४) अपने वृद्धों का सम्मान-सत्कार करते, उनकी बात पर कान देते थे; (५) स्त्रियों, कन्याओं पर अत्याचार और जबर्दस्ती नहीं करते थे; (६) नगर के भीतर और बाहर के चैत्यों (देवस्थानों) का सत्कार-सम्मान करते और उनके लिये प्रदत्त सम्पत्ति और धार्मिक बलि को छीनते नहीं थे; (७) धर्माचार्यों (अर्हतों) की रक्षा करते और इस बात का ध्यान रखते कि वे देश में सुख से विचरें।

वैशाली-वासियों के ये सात गुण बुद्ध को बहुत पसन्द आये थे। इनमें पहले तीन तो जनतान्त्रिक व्यवस्था के मूलमंत्र हैं। वृद्धों और स्त्रियों के प्रति सम्मान का भाव उनकी उच्च संस्कृति का द्योतक है। अन्तिम दो बातें धर्म के प्रति वज्जियों की उदारता को बतलाती हैं।

बुद्ध ने इसी वैशाली के बाहर सारंदद-चैत्य में वैशाली-वासियों को उनकी इन सात बातों पर अटल रहने का आदेश दिया था। अजातशत्रु के महामंत्री वर्षकार को उसकी बात का जवाब देते मगध की तत्कालीन राजधानी राजगृह में बुद्ध ने कहा था "ब्राह्मण ! एक समय मैं वैशाली के सारंदद-चैत्य में ठहरा हुआ था, वहाँ मैंने वज्जियों को यह सात पतन-विरोधी बातें बतलायी थीं। जब तक ये सात बातें वज्जियों में रहेंगी, ...तब तक वज्जियों की उन्नति ही होगी, हानि नहीं।

वैशाली प्रजातंत्र की न्याय-व्यवस्था कितनी सुन्दर थी, इसकी कुछ झलक हमें दीघनिकाय की अट्ठकथा[1] में मिलती है : "परम्परा से चला आया वज्जि-धर्म यह था, कि वज्जि के शासक 'यह चोर है, अपराधी है' न कह आदमी को **विनिश्चय-महामात्य** (न्यायाधीश) के हाथ में दे देते थे। वह विचार करता, अपराधी न होने पर छोड़ देता, अपराधी होने पर अपने कुछ न कह **व्यवहारिक** (न्यायाध्यक्ष) को दे देता। . . . .वह भी अपराधी जानने पर **सूत्रधार** को दे देता। . . . .वह भी विचार कर निरपराध होने पर छोड़ देता, अपराधी होने पर **अष्ट-कुलिक** को दे देता। वह भी वैसा ही करके **सेनापति** को, सेनापति **उपराज** (उपाध्यक्ष) को, और उपराज **राजा** (गणपति) को दे देता। राजा विचार कर यदि अपराधी न होता तो छोड़ देता और अपराधी होने पर **प्रवेणि-पुस्तक** (दण्डविधान) बँचवाता। प्रवेणि-पुस्तक में लिखा रहता, कि अमुक अपराध का अमुक दण्ड है। अपराध को उससे मिलाकर दण्ड दिया जाता।"

अपराधी के अपराध के सम्बन्ध में न्याय करने के लिए कितना ध्यान रखा जाता, यह इस उद्धरण से मालूम होता है। इससे यह भी मालूम होता है, कि वैशाली प्रजातन्त्र की अपनी प्रवेणि-पुस्तक या दण्डविधान भी था, जिसका बड़ी कड़ाई से अनुसरण किया जाता था।

वर्षकार बुद्ध के मुख से वज्जियों के बारे में अपने अनुकूल कोई बात नहीं सुन सका। उसने लौट कर अजातशत्रु से कहा "श्रमण गौतम (बुद्ध) के कथन से तो वज्जी को किसी प्रकार लिया नहीं जा सकता। अच्छा तो उपलापन (घूस-रिश्वत) और आपस में फूट पैदा करने से काम बनाया जाय।" अजातशत्रु और उसके कुटिल मंत्री वर्षकार ने भेद (फूट)-नीति को ही पसन्द किया। वर्षकार ने सलाह दी—"महाराज ! परिषद् में वज्जियों की बात उठाओ। मैं कहूँगा उनसे क्या लेना है, रहने दो, वज्जी के शासक अपनी खेती और वाणिज्य से जीयें।" राजा और मन्त्री ने षड्यन्त्र किया; दोनों की मिली-भगत रही। वर्षकार वज्जियों का पक्षपाती बनकर राजसभा से निकल गया। उसकी ओर से वज्जियों के पास भेजी जाती चीज पकड़ी गई। राजा ने उसे इस अपराध में बन्धन-ताड़न न करा शिर मुड़ा नगर से निकाल दिया। वर्षकार गंगा पार हो वज्जी-भूमि में जाने लगा, तो कुछ वज्जियों ने कहा—"ब्राह्मण बड़ा मायावी है, गंगापार न उतरने दो।" लेकिन लिच्छवि वर्षकार के जाल में फँस गये और उसे अपने यहाँ शरण ही नहीं दी बल्कि अपना **विनिश्चय-महामात्य** (न्यायाधीश) बना दिया। वर्षकार ने तीन वर्ष तक वैशाली का नमक खाया और उसका प्रतिशोध उसने अपने विश्वासघात द्वारा किया। तीन वर्ष के भीतर उसने वैशाली वालों में ऐसी फूट डलवा दी कि "दो आदमी एक साथ नहीं जा सकते थे।" वर्षकार ने अपने मालिक को सूचना दी और फूट के कारण निर्बल वज्जी लोगों को अप्रयास मगधराज ने दास बना लिया।

वैशाली के पतन का यह समय बौद्ध परम्परा के अनुसार बुद्ध-निर्वाण (४८३ ईसा पूर्व) से तीन साल बाद है।

वैशाली इतने दिनों तक अनाथा रही, किन्तु इसी के विस्मृत इतिहास ने पहले-पहल भारतीयों को बतलाया, कि हम सदा निरंकुश राजाओं के जूओं को ही नहीं ढोते रहे, बल्कि हमारे यहाँ भी अपने प्रजातन्त्र थे। वैशाली प्रजातन्त्र बहुत शक्तिशाली था। बुद्ध के समय के भारत के सबसे बड़े राज्य कोसल—जो गंडक, गंगा और हिमालय की सीमाओं से घिरा था—का राजा प्रसेनजित एक बार बहुत घबड़ाया हुआ था। उसे देखकर बुद्ध ने पूछा—"क्या महाराज ! तुम पर राजा मागध श्रेणिक बिम्बसार या वैशालिक लिच्छवि तो नहीं बिगड़े हैं।" लिच्छवियों के कोप से कोसल-राज्य का होश-हवास बिगड़ सकता था, यह लिच्छवियों की शक्ति का परिचय देता है। वैशाली गण के सीमान्त पर दो ही प्रबल राजशक्तियाँ थीं—दक्षिण और पूर्व में मगध और पच्छिम में कोसल। पच्छिमी सीमा पर मही (आधुनिक गंडक) बहती थी, इसके लिये साक्षात् प्रमाण नहीं मिलता, लेकिन वज्जी के पच्छिम मल्लों का संघराज्य था, जो कोसल राज्य के आधिपत्य को स्वीकार करते अपनी संघप्रणाली को किसी न किसी तरह सुरक्षित रखे हुए था। मल्ल और लिच्छवि दोनों पड़ोसी जातियों की सीमा गंडक ही रही होगी, लेकिन उस समय गंडक (मही) की धारा वहीं नहीं थी, जहाँ कि वह आज है। सोनपुर, शीतलपुर, मढ़ौरा होती जो नदी आजकल छपरा

[1] वही (पृष्ठ ११८)

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जिले में बहती है, उसकी निचली धारा ग्राज भी मही के नाम से प्रसिद्ध है। हम कह सकते हैं, कि वज्जी की प्राचीन भूमि वही थी, जिसकी सीमाएँ ग्राजकल की भोजपुरी, मगही ग्रौर ग्रंगिका (मुंगेर की छिका-छिकी) भाषा से सीमित थी, इतने ग्रपवाद के साथ कि वर्तमान चम्पारन भी प्राचीन वज्जीगण के भीतर पड़ता था।

वर्तमान भारत के लिये यह भूमि ग्रत्यन्त पुनीत है। ढाई हजार वर्ष बाद भारत फिर ग्रपना संघराज्य स्थापित करने जा रहा है। उसे ग्रपने यशस्वी वैशालीगण ग्रौर उसकी परम्परा का ग्रभिमान होना ग्रावश्यक है। वस्तुतः हमारे ऊपर निरंकुश राज-शासन की कालरात्रि में वैशाली ग्रौर यौधेय दो ही जनतन्त्र के प्रकाश-स्तम्भ थे, जो यह भी सिद्ध करते रहे, कि प्रजातन्त्र-शासन-प्रणाली हमारे लिए बिल्कुल नयी चीज नहीं है। सहस्रों वर्षों से देशी ग्रौर विदेशी निरंकुश शासक बराबर यही प्रयत्न करते रहे, कि हम ग्रपनी प्रजातन्त्रिक परम्परा को भूल जायें। वह बहुत हद तक ग्रपने इस कार्य में सफल भी हुए, किन्तु पुरातत्त्व-वेत्ताग्रों ग्रौर इतिहासज्ञों की खोजों ने उनके प्रयत्नों को सफल नहीं होने दिया ग्रौर ग्रब तो देश की ग्रावश्यकता ग्रौर माँग है, कि विदेशी शासन के हटने के बाद भारत प्रजातन्त्र राज्य घोषित किया जाय। हम जानते हैं, कि वह समय दूर नहीं है, जब हमारे बालकों के लिए इतिहास की पुस्तकों में वैशाली प्रजातन्त्र के लिये एक विशेष स्थान रखना पड़ेगा। हाँ, ग्रभी भी देश के बड़े नेता इस महत्त्व को नहीं समझते, ग्रौर न समझने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं, कि भावी भारतीय प्रजातन्त्र को ग्रपने वैशाली ग्रौर यौधेय प्रजातन्त्रों से कितनी प्रेरणा मिलेगी। यौधेय वही भूमि है, जिसमें राजधानी दिल्ली ग्रवस्थित है, लेकिन दिल्ली के ग्राधुनिक प्रभुग्रों को इसका ख्याल नहीं है, कि एक समय यौधेय के कट्टर शत्रु ने उनके लिये "यौधेयानां जयमंत्रधारिणाम्" लिखा था। जनतन्त्रता से ही बहुजनहित हो सकता है, हमारे देश का गौरव-पूर्ण भविष्य इसी बात पर निर्भय करता है, कि यहाँ जनतन्त्रता का एकच्छत्र राज्य हो ग्रौर इस जनतान्त्रिक भावना के सार्वजनीन प्रसार के लिए हमारे प्राचीन प्रजातन्त्रों का इतिहास बहुत सहायक हो सकता है।

प्रजातन्त्रीय कार्य-प्रणाली

गणों की सर्वोपरि शासन-सभा या पार्लियामेंट को **संस्था** कहा जाता था ग्रौर जहाँ संस्था की बैठक हुग्रा करती, उसे **संस्थागार** (संथागार) कहा जाता। वैशाली के भीतर संस्थागार की एक बड़ी शाला थी, जिसमें गणतन्त्र के सदस्य इकट्ठा होकर राजकाज ग्रौर विधान की बातों का निर्णय किया करते थे। संस्थागार की बैठकों में शासनीय कार्य के समाप्त हो जाने पर लोग दूसरी सामाजिक ग्रादि चर्चाग्रों में लग सकते थे। संस्थागार में कभी-कभी ग्रतिथियों को भी ठहराया जाता था। पाली ग्रन्थों में इस बात का बहुत ध्यान रखा गया है कि संस्था तथा संस्थागार को राजतन्त्रीय देशों से सम्बद्ध न किया जाय।

वैशाली या कुसीनारा की **संस्थाएँ** किस तरह सभा की कार्यवाही करती थीं, कैसे वादविवाद होते थे ग्रौर किस तरह वादों का निर्णय ग्रौर मत लिया जाता था, इसका हमारे पास कोई साक्षात् प्रमाण नहीं है। किन्तु हम जानते हैं, कि बुद्ध ने ग्रपने भिक्षु-संघ की स्थापना इन्हीं संघराज्यों के नमूने पर की थी। इसलिये इस विषय में भिक्षुसंघ के विधान (विनय-नियमों) से हम समझ सकते हैं, कि संघ-राज्यों में किस तरह **संस्था** काम करती थी। गण-राज्य के लिए संघ का शब्द त्रिपिटक में ग्राया है—"हे गौतम! यह जो **संघ** है, जैसे कि वज्जी या मल्ल, वह ग्रपने राज्य में 'मारो' कह कर मरवा सकते हैं, 'जलाग्रो' कह कर जलवा सकते हैं, 'देश निकालो' कह कर देश से निकाल सकते हैं।"[1]

संस्था के प्रमुख व्यक्तियों में संस्था-राज, उपराज, सेनापति, ग्रष्टकुलिक, व्यवहारिक ग्रौर विनिश्चय-महामात्य का नाम हम बतला चुके हैं। राजा ग्रौर उपराज राष्ट्रपति ग्रौर उपराष्ट्रपति को कहा जाता। सेनापति सारी लिच्छविसेना का प्रमुख होता--बुद्ध के समय सिंह सेनापति लिच्छवियों का सेनापति था। ग्रष्टकुलिक से 'ग्राठ कुलोंके प्रधान-व्यक्ति' ग्रर्थ नहीं लिया जा सकता, क्योंकि "कुलिक" नामक पदाधिकारी गुप्तकाल में भी होता था। नगर की निगम-सभा में एक श्रेष्ठी ग्रौर एक सार्थवाह हुग्रा करते थे ग्रौर बाकी सदस्य कुलिक कहे जाते थे, जिनका प्रमुख "प्रथम-कुलिक" होता था। यहीं बसाढ़ की खुदाई में गुप्तकालीन स्तर से हरि ग्रौर उग्रसिंह नाम के दो प्रथम-कुलिकों ग्रौर भगदत्त, गोरीदास, गोंड, ग्रोमभट्ट जैसे कितने ही कुलिकों की मुद्राएँ मिली हैं। ग्रष्टकुलिक, जान पड़ता है, वैशाली के ग्राठ नगराधिकारियों को कहा जाता था। **व्यवहारिक** ग्रौर **विनिश्चय-महामात्य** दोनों न्यायाधिकारी थे।

संस्था की बैठक संस्था-राज या उपराज की ग्रध्यक्षता में हुग्रा करती थी। यदि बौद्ध भिक्षु-संघ की समानता से काम लिया जाय, तो किसी भी प्रस्ताव को जब कोई सदस्य पेश करता, वह सीधे पूज्य संघ--भन्ते संघ--को संबोधित करता था। प्रस्ताव रखने के क्रम बंधे थे। जैसे--

"(१) **याचना** में संघ के सामने प्रस्ताव रखने की ग्राज्ञा माँगी जाती।

[1] **मज्झिमनिकाय** १।४।५ (पृष्ठ १४०)

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उदाहरण के लिये हम **उद्वाहिका** (Select Committee) के निर्वाचन की विधि के बारे में यहाँ विनयपिटक के वचन को देते हैं :—

"**याचना**—पहले उस व्यक्ति से पूछना चाहिये तब...............

"(२) **ज्ञप्ति**—भन्ते ! संघ मेरी बात सुने । हमारे इस अधिकरण (विवाद-विषय) पर विचार करते समय अनर्गल बातें होने लगती हैं—भाषण का अर्थ नहीं समझ पड़ता । यदि संघ उचित समझे, तो इस बात को उद्वाहिका द्वारा निर्णय के लिये अमुक अमुक व्यक्तियों को चुने ।"

इस प्रकार प्रस्ताव की सूचना संघ के सामने रख दी जाती ।

फिर अनुश्रावण द्वारा उसके सम्बन्ध में खुले वाद-विवाद के लिए प्रस्ताव को रखा जाता, जैसे—

"(३) **अनुश्रावण**—"भन्ते ! संघ मेरी बात सुने । हमारे इस अधिकरण (विवाद-विषय) पर विचार करते समय अनर्गल बात होने लगती है, भाषण का अर्थ नहीं समझ पड़ता । संघ इस अधिकरण को उद्वाहिका द्वारा निश्चय कराने के लिए अमुक-अमुक व्यक्तियों को चुन रहा है । जिस आयुष्मान् को यह बात पसन्द हो, वह चुप रहे, जिसको न हो वह बोले ।"

यदि कोई प्रस्ताव के विरुद्ध बोलना चाहता, तो उसे बोलने का अधिकार दिया जाता । यदि कोई नहीं बोलता, तो अनुश्रावण के वाक्य को फिर दोहराया जाता । और इस पर भी यदि कहीं से कोई विरोध में बोलने को तैयार नहीं होता, तो **अनुश्रावण** वाक्य को तेहराया जाता । अन्त में संघनायक संघ की राय के बारे में निम्न प्रकार अपनी धारणा घोषित करता :

(४) **धारणा**—"संघ ने इस अधिकरण को उद्वाहिका द्वारा निश्चय कराने के लिए अमुक-अमुक व्यक्तियों को चुन लिया । संघ इसे स्वीकारता है, इसी लिए वह चुप है, ऐसा मैं धारण करता हूँ ।"[1]

जब संस्था सर्व सम्मति से किसी निर्णय पर नहीं पहुँचती, तब इसके लिए सम्मति या वोट लेना पड़ता था । वोट के लिए उस समय **छन्द** शब्द का प्रयोग होता था । (इसी छन्द से आधुनिक चन्दा शब्द निकला प्रतीत होता है, जिसमें मत-दान के स्थान में अर्थदान का भाव आ गया है) । छन्द ग्रहण के लिए रंगीन शलाकाओं का उपयोग किया जाता था, जिन्हें **छन्द-शलाका** कहा जाता था । प्रस्ताव के पक्ष और विपक्ष में प्रत्येक के लिए अलग अलग दो रंग की शलाकाएँ निश्चित कर ली जाती थीं । फिर इन शलाकाओं को दो भिन्न भिन्न डलियों में रख कर **शलाकाग्रहापक** सदस्यों के भीतर घूमता था, और वह अपने मत के अनुसार एक एक शलाका ले लेते थे । बाकी बची शलाकाओं को गिन कर मालूम कर लेते थे, कि बहुमत किस पक्ष में है । इस बहुमत के निर्णय को यद्भूयसिक कहा जाता था ।

आज कल यह तरीका व्यवहार्य नहीं हो सकता और छन्द शलाका से छन्द-पत्रिका का ढंग बेहतर है ।

हमारे विशाल प्रजातन्त्र के इतिहास-भवन के ये थोड़े से अवशेष रह गये हैं और इन्हें भी हम नहीं रक्षित कर पाये थे, बल्कि इन्हें समुद्र पार सिंहल और चीन के लोगों ने सुरक्षित रखा । अथेन्स के प्रजातन्त्र की बहुत सी बातें लिखित रूप में रक्षित रह गयीं, जिससे हम वहाँ की प्रजातन्त्रप्रणाली को जान सकते हैं । लेकिन वैशाली को वह सौभाग्य प्राप्त नहीं हुआ । अथेन्स के शिल्पियों ने पाषाण पर सौन्दर्य-सृष्टि की, जिससे उसके ध्वंसावशेषों में प्रजातंत्रीय गौरव के साक्षात्कार करने में बड़ी सहायता मिली । हमारा दुर्भाग्य है कि प्रजातंत्रीय वैशाली के कलाकार पाषाण पर नहीं, काष्ठ और मृत्तिका जैसे भंगुर पदार्थों पर सौन्दर्य-निर्माण किया करते थे । इस लिए बहुत कम ही आशा है, कि हम वैशाली के ध्वंसावशेषों में अधिक महत्त्वपूर्ण वस्तुओं को प्राप्त कर सकेंगे । लेकिन यह धरती हमारे प्राचीन गौरव की किन किन वस्तुओं को अपने भीतर छिपाये हुए है, इसके बारे में हम क्या कह सकते हैं ? आखिर वैशाली के सिर्फ एक छोटे से अंश की ही खुदाई हो पायी है ।

वैशाली नगरी

बौद्ध-परम्परा के अनुसार लिच्छवियों की नगरी का यह नाम इसी लिए पड़ा कि जन-संख्या की वृद्धि के कारण नगर-प्राकार को कई बार हटा हटा कर उसे विशाल किया गया । "उस समय वैशाली समृद्धिशाली बहुत मनुष्यों से भरी, अन्न-पान-सम्पन्न थी । उसमें ७७७७ प्रासाद, ७७७७ कूटागार (कोठे), ७७७७ आराम (उद्यानगृह) और ७७७७ पुष्करिणियाँ थीं ।"[2] जैन ग्रन्थों से यह भी पता लगता है कि वैशाली के क्षत्रिय, ब्राह्मण और वणिक् अलग अलग उपनगर थे । वर्तमान **बनिया** वाणिय-गाम था । वासुकुण्ड को क्षत्रियकुण्डग्राम माना जा सकता है । लेकिन प्रश्न है मुख्य नगरी कितनी दूर में थी । बसाढ बस्ती और गढ़ मुख्य नगर में थे, इसमें सन्देह नहीं । वैशाली का विशाल नगर और दूर तक रहा होगा । उसमें नगर-प्राकार और नगर-द्वार भी थे, किन्तु आज भूमि से ऊपर कोई चिह्न दिखाई नहीं देता, यद्यपि वैशाली के

[1] विनय-पिटक, (चुल्लवग्ग) ४।३।५ (मेरा अनुवाद पृष्ठ ४१२)

[2] अंगुत्तरनिकाय अट्ठकथा २।४।५

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समकालीन श्रावस्ती (सहेट-महेट, जिला गोंडा) और कौशाम्बी (कोसम, जिला प्रयाग) के नगर-प्राकारों के ध्वंस अब भी दिखलाई पड़ते हैं। नगर-प्राकार का इस तरह लोप यही बतलाता है, कि वैशाली बहुत पहले उजाड़ हो गयी। सातवीं शताब्दी के चीन-यात्री ह्वेङ-चाङ के समय वैशाली बिलकुल उजाड़ थी, और बौद्ध तीर्थ-स्थान भी इतने उजड़ गये थे, कि ह्वेङ-चाङ के वर्णन से भिन्न भिन्न स्थानों का कोई ठीक से परिचय नहीं मिलता। ईसा की चौथी सदी में फाहियान का वर्णन अधिक स्पष्ट है और अधिक प्रामाणिक भी मालूम पड़ता है। तीरभुक्ति (तिरहुत) के उपरिक (गवर्नर) और कुमारामात्य (जिलाधीश) की मुद्राओं से सिद्ध होता है, कि गुप्तकाल में उसका महत्त्व था। लेकिन साथ ही इन मोहरों से यह सिद्ध नहीं होता, कि प्रजातंत्रीय वैशाली का वैभव तब तक अक्षुण्ण चला आया था।

कोल्हुआ में जहाँ आज भी अशोक स्तम्भ खड़ा है, वहीं कूटागार-शाला थी। भगवान् बुद्ध वहाँ कई बार निवास कर चुके थे। यह कूटागार-शाला **महावन** के भीतर थी, जो कि हिमालय से समुद्र तक चले गये महावन का एक अंश था। जंगलों की इस अधिकता से यह भी मानना होगा, कि मौर्य चन्द्रगुप्त कालीन पाटलिपुत्र की तरह वैशाली का नगर-प्राकार भी शालकाष्ठ का था। इसीलिए उसका पीछे तक बचा रहना सम्भव नहीं था। पाली ग्रन्थों[१] से मालूम होता है कि वैशाली की चार दिशाओं में चार प्रसिद्ध चैत्य (उद्यान-पुष्करिणी-सहित देवस्थान) थे—पूर्व में **उदयन**-चैत्य, दक्षिण में **गोतमक**-चैत्य, पच्छिम में **सप्ताम्रक**-चैत्य और उत्तर में **बहुपुत्रक**-चैत्य। वैशाली में अचेल कोर-मट्टक नामक एक बड़ा प्रभावशाली नागा रहता था। वैशाली के लोगों में उसका बड़ा सम्मान था। उसने सात प्रतिज्ञाएँ ले रखी थीं—

(१) सदा नंगा रहना, वस्त्र न धारण करना; (२) जीवन भर ब्रह्मचारी रहना; (३) भात दाल न खा, केवल मांस खाना और सुरा पीना; (४) वैशाली में पूर्व की ओर उदयन चैत्य से आगे न जाना; (५) दक्षिण में गोतमक चैत्य से आगे न जाना; (६) पच्छिम में सप्ताम्रक चैत्य से आगे न जाना और (७) उत्तर में बहुपुत्रक चैत्य से आगे न जाना। ये चारों चैत्य, जान पड़ता है, वैशाली नगर के पूर्व, दक्षिण, पच्छिम और उत्तर के महाद्वारों के बाहर थे। आज भी पूरब में कामन-छपरा के चौमुखी महादेव, उत्तर में बनिया के चौमुखी महादेव मौजूद हैं, जो क्रमशः उदयन और बहुपुत्रक चैत्य हो सकते हैं। फाहियान के अनुसार बुद्ध ने अन्तिम बार वैशाली के पश्चिम-द्वार से बाहर निकल कर नागावलोकन किया था। यह स्थान सप्ताम्रक चैत्य के आसपास रहा होगा, जिसे **बोधा** के आस पास कहीं होना चाहिये। दक्षिण द्वार के बाहर गोतमक चैत्य था, जिसे परमानन्दपुर से कोसा के गुप्त महादेव के दक्षिण तक ढूँढ़ना होगा। इस प्रकार हम पुरानी वैशाली के नगर-सीमान्त का कुछ अनुमान कर सकते हैं।

इन प्रधान चैत्यों में अच्छा वृत्ति-बन्धान रहा होगा, यह वज्जी-धर्म के अनुसार उचित ही था। इन चार प्रधान चैत्यों के अतिरिक्त और भी कई चैत्य थे, जिनमें एक था **चापाल चैत्य**। यहीं पर बुद्ध ने ई० पू० ४८२ की माघ-पूर्णिमा के आस पास कहा था—"आज से तीन मास बाद तथा-गत का निर्वाण होगा।" फाहियान ने इसे नगर से ३ ली उत्तर-पच्छिम बतलाया है। अनुवादकों ने इस शब्द को **धनुर्बाण-त्याग** बना दिया है, जो वस्तुतः चापाल (चाप रख देने) के चीनी भावान्तर का विकृत रूप है। यह स्थान **भीमसेन-का-पल्ला** के आस पास कहीं होना चाहिये। **सारंदद-चैत्य** भी वैशाली के पास था। यहीं पर बुद्ध ने लिच्छवियों को सात **अपरिहाणीय** (हानि से बचाने वाले) धर्मों का उपदेश किया था। यह स्थान कहाँ था, इसे नहीं कहा जा सकता। फाहियान ने इसके बारे में कुछ नहीं लिखा है। इन के अतिरिक्त वैशाली नगर के बाहर कितने ही और साधुओं के आराम थे, जिनमें **तिंदुक-खाणु** में परिव्राजकों का आराम और **अवरपुर-वनसंड** में भी एक आराम था—अवरपुर-वनसंड नगर से पच्छिम में रहा होगा। बालुकाराम अशोक-स्तंभ से पच्छिम में रहा होगा। यहीं द्वितीयसंगीति हुई थी।

नगर के भीतर संस्थागार, कूटागारों और प्रासादों के अतिरिक्त एक महत्त्वपूर्ण वस्तु थी **अभिषेक-पुष्करिणी**, जिस में संस्था के सदस्यों का अभिषेक कराया जाता था और उस में किसी भी बाहरी आदमी का प्रवेश अत्यन्त निषिद्ध था।

वज्जी के दूसरे नगर और गाँव

पाटलिपुत्र से गंगापार हो कर बुद्ध कोटिग्राम पहुँचे थे। इसके अतिरिक्त उक्काचेल (उल्काचेल) नामक नगर भी गंगा के तट पर था। कोटिग्राम और उल्काचेल कहाँ थे, इस के बारे में इससे अधिक कुछ नहीं कहा जा सकता कि वह सोनपुर, हाजीपुर के आस पास में थे। गण्डक तो अवश्य ही उस समय सोनपुर से पच्छिम बहती थी।

अपनी अन्तिमयात्रा में राजगृह से आते वक्त बुद्ध पाटलिपुत्र में गंगा पार हुए। पाटलिपुत्र को उसी समय राजधानी और एक बड़े नगर के रूप में बसाया जा रहा था। गंगा पार हो वह **कोटिग्राम** पहुँचे थे। कोटिग्राम से अगला पड़ाव **नादिका** में पड़ा। नादिका एक अच्छा खासा नगर था, जो ज्ञातृका का अपभ्रंश मालूम होता है। ज्ञातृ के पाली में **नाट** और **नात** दोनों रूप मिलते हैं, जैसे ज्ञातृ-पुत्र का नाटपुत्त और नातपुत्त। नादिका का दूसरा उच्चारण नादिका भी है। नादिका में **गिंजकावसथ** नामक ईंटों की बनी एक अच्छी अतिथिशाला थी।

[१] **दीघनिकाय, पाथिकसुत्त (पृष्ठ २१८)**

Digitization by Arya Samaj Charitable Foundation, Chennai

बुद्ध ने इसी में निवास किया था। इसी के पास गोसिंग शालवन नामक शालों का जंगल था। नादिका से बुद्ध अम्बपाली के बगीचे में पहुँचे थे। वैशाली की कीर्तिमती रूपाजीवा अम्बपाली ने यहीं अपने आमों के बगीचे में बुद्ध को भोजन के लिए निमंत्रित किया था, और बुद्ध की स्वीकृति से इतनी उल्लसित हुई थी कि लौटते समय उसने तरुण-तरुण लिच्छवियों के रथ के धुरों से धुरा, चक्कों से चक्का और जुओं से जुआ टकरा दिया। लिच्छवियों ने जब इस का कारण पूछा, तो बोली[1]—

"आर्यपुत्रो! क्योंकि मैंने भिक्षु-संघ के साथ भगवान् को कल भोज के लिए निमंत्रित किया है।"

"जे! अम्बपाली, सौ हजार ले कर इस भोज को हमें देने दो।"

"यदि वैशाली-जनपद भी दे दो, तो भी इस महान् भोज को मैं नहीं दूँगी।"

इस पर लिच्छवियों ने कहा था—"अरे! हमें अम्बिका ने जीत लिया, हमें अम्बिका ने छका दिया।"

इस घटना से यह भी पता लगता है, कि वैशाली के शासक एक गणिका के आत्मसम्मान का भी कितना ख्याल करते थे।

इसी बार अम्बपाली ने अपने आम्रवन को भिक्षु-संघ को प्रदान किया था।

भगवान् बुद्ध ने अपने जीवन का अन्तिम वर्षावास वेलुवगामक नामक वैशाली के पास के ग्राम में बिताया।

वैशाली से अपने निर्वाण-स्थान **कुसीनारा** (कसया) की ओर जाते वक्त रास्ते में उन्हें **भण्डगाम, अम्बगाम, हत्थिगाम** (हस्तिग्राम) मिले थे। इस के आगे भोगनगर आया, जो सम्भवतः वज्जी प्रजातंत्र से बाहर का गाँव था।

वज्जी भूमि की नदियों में मही और वग्गुमुदा दो के नाम मिले हैं। वग्गुमुदा सम्भवतः बागमती का ही नाम था।

वैशाली संघ-राज्य के इतिहास के बारे में यहाँ पाली में मौजूद ऐतिहासिक सामग्री के आधार पर कहा गया है। बौद्ध वाङ्मय पाली के अतिरिक्त चीनी और तिब्बती भाषा में भी बहुत विशाल परिमाण में पाया जाता है। उससे भी हमें कितनी ही महत्त्वपूर्ण ज्ञातव्य बातें मालूम हो सकती हैं। फिर जैन वाङ्मय भी बहुत विशाल है और उसके कितने ही ग्रन्थ अब भी अप्रकाशित हैं। जैन प्राचीन ग्रन्थों के दोहाई देते रहने पर भी वैशालिक भगवान् महावीर को जैन लोग इस भूमि से दूर खींच ले गये हैं। अपने वाङ्मय के अध्ययन से यह समझना मुश्किल नहीं होता, कि श्रमण महावीर कहाँ पैदा हुए थे। जैन विद्वान् अब इसे समझने लगे हैं। भगवान् महावीर ने अपने सिद्धिलाभ के पहिले के तपस्वी जीवन के आठ वर्षावास वैशाली में बिताये थे। और सिद्धि लाभ के बाद चार और वर्षावास वैशाली में बिताये। वैशाली ही श्रमण महावीर की जन्मभूमि थी। यह कम आश्चर्य की बात नहीं है, कि जैनों ने अपने तीर्थंकर की जन्मभूमि का नाम तक भुला दिया। ऐसा क्यों हुआ? इसके लिए दो चार शताब्दियाँ ऐसी होनी चाहियें, जब कि वज्जी भूमि और वैशाली से जैनों का कोई सम्पर्क नहीं रह गया था। अस्तु।

वैशाली-संघ के सामने काम

आदमी प्राचीन इतिहास के सहारे नहीं जी सकता। प्राचीन इतिहास का काम है हमें उत्प्रेरित करना। वह प्रेरणा हमें मिलती रहेगी। वैशालीगण को आज हमें नये रूप में उज्जीवित करना चाहिये। हमें कम से कम रत्ती परगने तक को संघ का कार्य-क्षेत्र बनाना चाहिये—रत्ती भी, मैं समझता हूँ, लत्तीनत्तीज्ञातृ का ही अपभ्रंश रूप है। रत्ती परगने में लिच्छवियों की जनतंत्रता और स्वातन्त्र्य-प्रेम के साथ आर्थिक और सांस्कृतिक नवनिर्माण को हाथ में लेना चाहिये। वैसे तो सारे देश में उद्योगीकरण और कृषि के आधुनिक ढंग पर नवनिर्माण को छोड़ कर दूसरा कोई रास्ता नहीं है। हमारा जीवनस्तर बेतरह गिरा हुआ है, और ऊपर से पचास लाख खानेवाले मुखों की प्रतिवर्ष वृद्धि बड़ी ही भयंकर स्थिति पैदा कर रही है। संघ को इस नवनिर्माण को अपने हाथ में लेकर पथ-प्रदर्शन करना चाहिये।

यह ठीक है कि इस काम में तब तक सफलता नहीं हो सकती, जब तक सरकार पूरी तरह से सहायता देने को तैयार नहीं है। लेकिन सरकार की सहायता भी उतनी लाभदायक नहीं होगी, यदि उसे काम में लाने के लिए जनता को तैयार नहीं किया जायगा।

मैं समझता हूँ शिक्षा और संस्कृति के कामों के लिए आपके पास बड़ी-बड़ी योजनाएं हैं, जिनमें कई लाखों का खर्च है। लेकिन यदि इस खर्च के लिए आप सिर्फ सरकारी सहायता और बाहर वालों के दान पर भरोसा रखेंगे और यदि वह आप को प्राप्त भी हो गया; तो भी उससे जनता का बहुत दूर तक आप फायदा नहीं कर सकेंगे।

इसके लिये आर्थिक नवनिर्माण ही सब से अच्छा ढंग है। रत्ती परगना में कोई पहाड़ नहीं और न किसी प्रकार के खनिज पदार्थ की ही सम्भावना है। यहाँ अनाज, ऊख, कपास, तेलहन, मछली, अंडी,-कीड़ा के उत्पादन और उन पर आधारित उद्योग-धंधों को बढ़ाया जा सकता है।

[1] दीघनिकाय (महापरिनिब्बाण सुत्त) (मेरा अनुवाद, पृष्ठ १२८)

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खेती की उपज को बढ़ाने के लिए सिंचाई और उस के लिए पानी को प्रचुर परिमाण में सुलभ करना होगा। यह काम बिजली या तेल से चलने वाले पम्पों से ही हो सकता है। यहाँ सरकारी सहायता अनिवार्यतया आवश्यक है। पानी बारहों महीना हमारी धरती के नीचे बह रहा है। हमें बारहों महीना उसे धरती के ऊपर ला रखने का प्रबन्ध करना है, जो कि आज के यान्त्रिक युग में बिलकुल आसान है। यदि हर खेत के लिए हर वक्त पानी सुलभ हो और खाद भी मिल सके, तो हम हर वक्त खेत में फसल तैयार रख सकते हैं और पैदावार को दुगुना-चौगुना नहीं, दस गुना बढ़ा सकते हैं।

खेती में किसान को पूरा श्रम करने और उसका फल प्राप्त करने के लिए जमींदारी और सूदखोरी के चंगुल से बचाना है। लेकिन इतने से ही हमारा अभीष्ट पूरा नहीं हो सकता। खेतों के जोतने और खोदने में कुछ हद तक यंत्रों की आवश्यकता है :

उदाहणार्थ मोटरहल (ट्रेक्टर) से एक बार गहरी जोताई कर देने से तीन साल तक खेत घास से पाक हो जाता है और पौधे की जड़ भी अधिक नीचे तक पहुँच, पृथिवी की नमी से लाभ उठा सकती है। लेकिन यह सब काम तभी हो सकता है, जब कि छोटे छोटे कोलों और क्यारियों को बड़े चकों में परिणत किया जाय, अर्थात् साझे की खेती का प्रचार हो। साझे की खेती के लिए किसानों को तैयार करना असम्भव नहीं है, यदि इसके लिए लगनवाले मार्गदर्शक, कम झगड़े वाले ग्राम और सरकार की पूरी सहायता मिले। गावों में तीन तरह के लोग रहते हैं : किन्हीं के पास पर्याप्त भूमि होती है, किन्हीं के पास थोड़ी और कुछ लोग बिलकुल बिना खेत के होते हैं। खेत वालों—विशेष कर अधिक खेत वालों—को साझे की खेती में लाने के लिये यही रास्ता है, कि उन्हें फसल के सारे खर्च को काटकर प्रति एकड़ जितना अनाज आज कल मिल रहा है, उतना आगे मिलते रहने का विश्वास दिला दिया जाय। इसके बाद उनको साझे की खेती में सम्मिलित होने में कोई उचित एतराज नहीं हो सकता। इस तरह हम खेतों की मेंड़ों को तोड़ कर बड़े-बड़े चक बना सकते हैं, जिनमें नये ढंग से खेती कर के उपज बढ़ायी जा सकती है, जिससे निवासियों की आय बढ़ सकती है। फिर भोजपुरी कहावत के अनुसार "चारों वेद धमाकें जौके डांड़े", और तब सांस्कृतिक कार्यो को भी आप तेजी से आगे बढ़ा सकते हैं। कृषि के साथ जिन उद्योगों की संभावना हो सकती है, उनकी संस्थापना से भी संघ-भूमि को समृद्ध कर सकते हैं।

हमें प्राचीन वैशाली से उत्प्रेरित हो नवीन प्रजातंत्रीय भारत के लिए यहाँ एक आदर्श भूखंड तैयार करना चाहिये।

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इस वैशाली के आँगन में

प्रिंसिपल मनोरंजन प्रसाद सिंह, एम० ए०

(१)

किस अतीत गौरव की गाथा कवि ! तू गाने आया है ?
किस युग की तू करुण कहानी हमें सुनाने आया है ?
क्यों विस्मृत घटनाओं को फिर याद दिलाने आया है ?
क्यों सदियों की सुप्त वेदना पुनः जगाने आया है ?
रहने दे ये मूक व्यथाएँ सारी अपने ही मन में ।
मत कह, क्या क्या हुआ यहाँ इस वैशाली के आँगन में ।।

(२)

सुना, किसी दिन यहीं लिच्छवि शासन था गौरवशाली ।
सुना, कभी थी उन्नति के उस उच्च शिखर पर वैशाली ।।
जग जग में थी राजतन्त्र की घटा घिरी काली काली ;
तब भी इस प्राचीन भूमि में प्रजातन्त्र की थी लाली ।
लेकिन है क्या लाभ भला अब इस अतीत के चिन्तन में ?
मत कह, क्या क्या हुआ यहाँ इस वैशाली के आँगन में ।।

(३)

सुना, यहीं पर बुद्धदेव ने किया कभी था आप निवास ।
महारण्य की पुण्य-कुटी में था उनका सुन्दर आवास ।।
यहीं सुन्दरी आम्रदारिका तज कर सारे भोग-विलास
आयी थी श्रद्धा समेत उपदेश ग्रहण को उनके पास ।।
विकसी थी वह मृदुल मञ्जरी यहीं आम्र के कानन में ।
मत कह, क्या क्या हुआ यहाँ इस वैशाली के आँगन में ।।

(४)

सुना, यहीं उत्पन्न हुआ था किसी समय वह राजकुमार
त्याग दिये थे जिसने जग के भोग-विलास, साज-शृङ्गार ,
जिसके निर्मल जैन धर्म का देश-देश में हुआ प्रचार ,
तीर्थङ्कर जिस महावीर के यश अब भी गाता संसार ।
है पवित्रता भरी हुई इस विमल भूमि के कण-कण में ।
मत कह, क्या क्या हुआ यहाँ इस वैशाली के आँगन में ।।

(५)

है उस प्रियदर्शी अशोक का स्तम्भ आज भी गड़ा हुआ ।
उस अतीत गौरव का है यह चिह्न आज भी खड़ा हुआ ।।
लुप्त हो गये सभी, जिन्हें था पा करके यह बड़ा हुआ ।
राजनगर राजा विशाल का आज शून्य है पड़ा हुआ ।।
ध्वनि अब भी आती है उसकी गण्डक के कल क्रन्दन में ।
मत कह, क्या क्या हुआ यहाँ इस वैशाली के आँगन में ।।

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VAIŚĀLĪ IN ANCIENT LITERATURE

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I. Origin, Importance & Location

Vaiśālī, 'the large city', is famous in Indian history as the capital of the Licchavirājās and the head-quarters of the great and powerful Vajjian confederacy. It is closely associated with sacred memories of the founders of Jainism and Buddhism and with the two great faiths that evolved in north-eastern India, five hundred years before the birth of Christ. It really claims Mahāvīra the celebrated founder of Jainism as its own citizen. Mahāvīra is spoken as Vesālie or Vaiśālika, i.e., an inhabitant of Vaiśālī.[1] Abhayadeva in his commentary on the *Bhagavatīsūtra* (2. 1; 12, 2) explains Vaiśālika by Mahāvīra and speaks of Viśālā as 'Mahāvīra-jananī' or the mother of Mahāvīra.[2] The venerable ascetic Mahāvīra, a Videha, son of Videhadattā, a native of Videha, a prince of Videha, had lived 30 years in Videha, the capital of which was Vaiśālī, when his parents died.[3] During his later ascetic life Mahāvīra did not neglect the city of his birth, and out of forty-two rainy seasons during this period of his life he passed no less than twelve at Vaiśālī.[4] Vaiśālī was also hallowed by the dust of the feet of the Buddha early in his career and many of his immortal discourses were delivered here either at the mango-grove of Ambapālī in the outskirts of the city or at Kūṭāgāraśālā in Mahāvana, the great forest stretching out up to the Himalayas.

As to the origin of the city of Vaiśālī it was founded by the Licchavis and the area covered by it was very extensive. Vālmīki in the Bālakāṇḍa[5] of the *Rāmāyaṇa* tells us that it was founded by a son of Ikṣvāku and the heavenly nymph Alambuṣā; after his name Viśāla the city itself came to be called Viśālā. According to the Purāṇas, Viśāla was succeeded by Hemacandra, Sucandra, Dhūmrāśva, Sṛñjaya, Sahadeva, Kuśāśva, Somadatta, Kākustha and Sumati. According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[6] it was Tṛṇabindu who was descended from Ikṣvāku, had by Alambuṣā a son named Viśāla who founded the city of Vaiśālī. The *Rāmāyaṇa* tells us that when Rāma and his brother Lakṣmaṇa, guided by the sage Viśvāmitra, crossed the sacred river Ganges and reached its northern shore on their way to Mithilā the capital of the royal sage Janaka, they had a view of the city of Vaiśālī. It does not tell us that it was exactly on the bank of the river but it says that while seated on the

[1] Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras*, I, Intro. xi.

[2] Weber, *Indische Studien*, Band xvi, p. 263. "*Auch Abhayadeva zu Bhag.* 2, 1. 12, 2. *erklärt Vaiçālika durch Mahāvīra, und zwar als Metronymicum* (!); *Viçālā Mahāvīrajananī.*"

[3] Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras I*, 256; *Kalpa Sūtra*, Sec. 110.

[4] Jacobi, *Kalpasūtra*, sec. 122.

[5] Chap. 47, vv. 11-2.

[6] Wilson, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Vol. III, p. 246.

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northern shore they saw the town.[1] It might be that the distant towers or the pinnacles of temples caught their sight when they cast their glance northwards. The eminent travellers went to the city of Viśālā which was an excellent town, charming and heavenly, in fact a veritable *svarga*.[2] Viśvāmitra who was their celebrated guide, narrated a fairly long mythological account to show the importance of the locality where Indra himself had sojourned for about a thousand years. According to him, the Ikṣvāku prince ruling over the country at the time was Sumati by name and by favour of Ikṣvāku, the father of the eponymous founder of the city, all the kings of Vaiśālī (*sarve Vaiśālikā nṛpāḥ*) were long-lived, high-souled, possessed of strength and power and highly virtuous.[3] In Buddha's time the city of Vesālī (Vaiśālī) was encompassed by three walls at a distance of a *gāvuta* from one another and that at three places, there were gates with watch towers and buildings.[4] The three Districts as mentioned in the Tibetan Dulva and in the Buddhist commentary, may very well have been Vesālī proper, Kuṇḍapura and Vāṇiyagāma occupying respectively the south-eastern, the north-eastern and the western portions of the area of the entire city. Beyond Kuṇḍapura in a farther north-easterly direction lay the suburb of Kollāga which appears to have been principally inhabited by the Kṣatriyas of the Jñātri clan to which Mahāvīra belonged.[5] In Buddha's time, Vaiśālī was a populous and prosperous town, abundant with food. It had many storied buildings, pinnacled houses, pleasure gardens and lotus ponds.[6] The prosperity of Vaiśālī has been thus described in the *Lalitavistara*: "This great city is prosperous and proud, charming and delightful, crowded with many people, adorned with buildings of every description, storied mansions, buidings with towers and palaces, noble gateways and charming with beds of flowers in her numerous gardens and groves."[7] In fact it resembles the city of gods.

Outside the town of Vaiśālī there was a natural forest which, on account of the large area covered by it, was known as the Mahāvana. According to Buddhaghosa, a Buddhist commentator of the Theravāda school, a Saṅghārāma or monastery was established in that forest. A *pāsāda* or a storeyed building was built on pillars and putting a pinnacle above, it was made into a *Kūṭāgāraśālā*, resembling a chariot of gods (*devavimāna*). Thus the whole monastery was known as the *Kūṭāgāraśālā*.[8]

Scholars differ as to the identification of Vaiśālī, the capital of the Licchavis. Cunningham with his immense knowledge of the country identified the present village of Basārh in the Muzaffarpore district in Tirhut as marking the spot where stood Vaiśālī in ancient days.[9] Vivien de St. Martin agreed with him. According to Rhys Davids the site was quite uncertain which had still to be looked

[1] *Rāmāyaṇa*, Bombay Edn., Chap. 45, v. 9.
"Uttaraṃ tīramāsādya sampūjyarṣigaṇaṃ tataḥ
Gaṅgākūle niviṣṭāste Viśālāṃ dadṛsuḥ purīṃ"

[2] *Ibid.*, Ch. 45, vv. 10-11:
"Viśālām nagarim ramyāṃ divyāṃ svargopamām tadā (v. 10).

[3] *Rāmāyaṇa*, Ch. 47, v. 18.

[4] *Jātaka*, (Fausböll), I. p. 504-*Vesālinagaraṃ gāvutagāvutantare tīhi pākārehi parikkhittaṃ, tīsu ṭhānesu gopuraṭṭālokayuttaṃ.*

[5] Hoernle, *Uvāsagadasāo*, II, tr. p. 4, n. 8.

[6] *Vinaya Texts*, II, SBE. p. 171.

[7] *Lalitavistara*, (Lefmann), Chap. III, p. 21:
"Iyaṃ Vaiśālī mahānagarī riddhāca sphītāca khemāca subhikkhāca ramaṇīyā cākīrṇabahujanamanussā ca vitardiniryuhatoraṇagavāksha-harmakūṭāgāraprāsādatalasamalaṅkritā ca puṣpavāṭikā-vanarājisaṃkusumitā ca Amarabhavanapuraprākāśyā sāpratirūpāsya........"

[8] *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, I, p. 309.

[9] *Archaeological Survey Report*, I, pp.55-56; XVI, p. 6.

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for somewhere in Tirhut.[1] W. Hoey[2] sought to establish the identity of Vaiśālī with Cherand in the Chapra or Saran District. This identification has been proved to be entirely untenable by V.A. Smith[3] who is of opinion that Vaiśālī may be fairly identified with the village of Basārh. This identity has been proved still more decisively by the Archaeological excavations carried out by Dr. T. Bloch on the site. Dr. Bloch excavated a mound called *Rājā-Visāl-kā-garh*. Three distinct strata have been found, the uppermost belonging to the period of the Mahommedan occupation of the place, the second at a depth of about 5 ft. from the surface belonging to the period of the Imperial Guptas, and the third at a still greater depth belonging to an ancient period of no definite date.[4] The finds in the second stratum are of very great value especially the find in one of the small chambers of a hoard of 700 clay seals evidently used as attachment to letters or other literary documents. They belonged partly to officials, partly to private persons, generally merchants or bankers, but one specimen bearing the figure of a *liṅga* with a *triśūla* on either side and the legend "*Āmrātakeśvara*" evidently belonged to a temple.[5] The names of certain Gupta kings, queens and princes on some of these seals, coupled with palæographic evidence, clearly demonstrate that they belonged to the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ when the Imperial Guptas were on the throne[6]. Some of the impressions show that the name Tīrabhukti which is the original form of Tirhut was applied to the province even in those early times and some show the name of the town itself, Vaiśālī. One of the clay seals of a circular area shows a female standing in a flower group with two attendants and two horizontal lines below reading

(*i*) [Vai]śālyām-araprakṛti-[ku]-
(*ii*) ṭumbinā [m].
"(*Seal*) of the householders of........at Vaiśālī.[7]"

Another seal also appears to have a similar legend. Another seal contains a Prakrit inscription recording the name of Vesālī (Vesāliye anusaṃyānakaṭakāre). All these go to prove the identity of the site with Vaiśālī and there seems to be no ground to question this conclusion any longer. It must be admitted that the results so far obtained by excavation are very meagre. If the site be properly excavated, we believe that we could get valuable materials for the reconstruction of the history of India.

II. *Vaiśālī in the itineraries of the Chinese pilgrims and in the Tibetan Works.*

We now come to the accounts of the city left by the Chinese travellers. Fā-Hien visited Vaiśālī at the beginning of the 5th century A.D., i.e., about a thousand years after the time the Buddha lived and delivered his discourses. The Chinese pilgrim says that to the north of the city there existed a large forest having in it the double-galleried vihāra where the Buddha dwelt and the tope over half the body of Ānanda.[8] Inside the city Āmrapālī the famous courtesan in Buddha's time built a vihāra in honour of the Buddha, which she presented to him so that he might reside there. A tope was also built at the spot where the Buddha "took his last walk."[9] Fā-Hien also saw a tope situated three li to the north-west of the city called "Bows and weapons laid down." Another tope was also built

[1] *Buddhist India*, 41.
[2] JASB, 1900, Vol. LXIX, Pt. I, pp. 78, 79, 80, and 83.
[3] JRAS, 1902, p. 267, n. 3.
[4] *Arch. Surv. An. Rep.* 1903-04, p. 74.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[6] *Ibid.* p. 110.
[7] *Ibid.* p. 110.
[8] Legge, *Travels of Fā-Hien*, p. 72.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

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at the place where the disciplinary rules in ten particulars were examined and collated.[1] The story of the parinirvāṇa of Ānanda and the division of the remnants of the body has been told by Fā-Hien. According to him when Ānanda was going from Magadha to Vaiśālī, wishing his parinirvāṇa to take place there, King Ajātaśatru of Magadha being informed of this fact pursued him with a body of soldiers and reached the river. The Licchavis of Vaiśālī also heard that Ānanda was coming to their city and they also came to meet him. In this way they all arrived together at the river. Ānanda considered that if he went forward the king would be angry, while if he went back, the Licchavis would resent his conduct. Therefore in the very middle of the river, he burnt his body in a fiery ecstasy of meditation and his parinirvāṇa was attained. He divided his body into two parts, leaving the half of it on each bank. The king got one half as a sacred relic.[2]

Yuan Chwang who visited Vaiśālī in the 7th century A.D. relates that the foundation of the old city "Vaiśālī" was 60 or 70 li in circuit and the palace city (i.e., the walled part of the city) was 4 and 5 li in circuit.[3] This would mean an area of about 20 miles in circumference for the outer town. The palace city of Yuan Chwang perhaps represents the earliest of the three cities which were built to accommodate the Licchavis as they were growing rather fast; but its area would not, in that case, agree with the statement that each of the three walls was at a distance of a *gāvuta* or a quarter yojana. This Chinese pilgrim visited the city more than 200 years after Fā-Hien found the double-gallaried vihāra in ruins. "To the east of the tope of the Jātaka narrative", the pilgrim continues, "was a wonder-working tope on the old foundations of the two-storied Preaching Hall in which Ju-lai delivered the *p'u-men-t'o-lo-ni* and other *sūtras*.[4] Close to the remains of the Preaching Hall spoken of by Fā-Hien, Yuan Chwang says there was the tope which contained the half body relic of Ānanda.[5] From another Chinese source,[6] we learn "This Vajorā country has a city called Vaiśālī rich in every kind of produce; the people in peace and contentment; the country enriched and beautiful as a heavenly mansion; the king called Drumarāja, his son without the least stain on his scutcheon, the king's treasuries full of gems, gold and silver."

The city of Vaiśālī has been described by the pilgrim as being above 5000 li in circuit, a very fertile region abounding in mangoes, plantains, and other fruits. According to him the people were honest, fond of good work, esteemers of learning and orthodox and heterodox in faith. The Tibetan Dulva (iii, f. 80) gives the following description of Vaiśālī. "There were three districts in the city. In the first district there were 7000 houses with golden towers, in the middle district there were 14000 houses with silver towers, and in the last district there were 21,000 houses with copper towers; in these lived the upper, the middle and the lower classes according to their positions."[7] In the Tibetan works Vaiśālī has been described as a prosperous and opulent city, a kind of earthly paradise with its handsome buildings, parks and gardens, singing birds and continual festivities among the Licchavis. In this connection it is interesting to note from Dulva (x.f.2) what the Chabbaggiya bhikkhus told Nanda and Upānanda when they visited Vaiśālī. According to these bhikkhus the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 75.
[2] Legge, *Travels of Fā-Hien*, pp. 75-77.
[3] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, II, p. 63.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 71
[5] *Ibid.* p. 71.
[6] Beal, *Romantic Legend of Śākya Buddha*, p. 28.
[7] Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 62.

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Buddha never saw the like of this even when he was among the Tāvatiṃsa gods.[1]

III. *Administrative and Political History.*

Vaiśālī does not appear to have been a full fledged democratic republic but an oligarchy in the sense that citizenship was confined to the members of the confederate clans. This form of Government was not rare in ancient India. There is ample evidence to show that in ancient times this form was much more in vogue than we are led to imagine from later literature. According to Hoernle, the government of Vaiśālī was vested in a senate composed of the heads of the resident Kṣatriya clans and presided over by an officer who had the title of king and assisted by a Viceroy and a Commander-in-Chief.[2] Some hold that the government of Vaiśālī seems to have resembled that of a Greek State.[3] The Licchavis of Vaiśālī who were the most powerful of the confederate clans of Videha formed a *saṅgha* or *gaṇa* i.e., an organised corporation. Kauṭilya, the great minister of the first Maurya Emperor, has indicated in his *Arthaśāstra* the real nature of the Licchavi form of government. According to him, the *Saṅghas* or corporations of the peoples like the Licchavis, the Vṛjis, the Mallas, the Madras, the Kukuras, the Kurus, the Pañchālas and others lived by the title of a *Rājā* (*Rājaśabdopajīvinaḥ*). It apparently means that among these peoples, each citizen had the right to call himself a *Rājā*, i.e., dignitary who did not owe allegiance or pay revenue to any one else, but each of whom held up his head high and not merely looked upon himself as a *Rājā* but considered that the word "*Rājā*" was his usual designation. This is corroborated by the account given in the *Lalitavistara* which, though a late work, preserves the tradition that at Vaiśālī there was no respect for age, nor for position, each one there thought that he was a *Rājā*.[4] Savarasvāmi in this commentary on the *Pūrvamīmāṃsā Sūtra* (Bk.II) points out that the word "*Rājā*" is a synonym for Kṣatriya and he supports his statement by the fact that even in his time, the word was used by the Andhras to designate a Kṣatriya. From the authority of Savarasvāmi it can be safely said that the word "*Rājā*" in early times designated a Kṣatriya and subsequently came to mean a king. Kauṭilya observes that all these corporations (*Saṅghas*) by virtue of their being united were unconquerable by others. A corporation, according to him, was the best and most helpful because of the power derived from its union which made it invincible.[5] Buddhist books inform us that the Licchavis were so strong as to defy the aggression of their country by any foreign power on account of their unity and concord and their practice of constantly meeting in their popular assemblies.[6]

The Licchavis of Vaiśālī had their public hall where they used to hold meetings and discuss both politics and religion. This public hall was known as *Santhāgāra*. Among the Licchavis the elders were highly respected, and they had an officer called the Regulator of Seats (*Āsanapaññāpaka*) whose function seems to have been to seat the members of the congregation in the order of their seniority.[7] They had to propose a resolution which had got to be approved by the members present. As might be expected in such an assembly, there were often violent disputes and quarrels with

[1] Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 63.
[2] *J. A. S. B.*, 1898, p. 40.
[3] Stevenson, *Heart of Jainism*, p. 22.
[4] *Lalitavistara* (Lefmann) I, p. 21; *Ibid.*, B. I. Series, Chap. III, 23.
[5] *Arthaśāstra* 2nd Ed. p. 378—*Saṅghalābho daṇḍa mitralābhānāmuttamaḥ.*
[6] *Buddhist Suttas*, *S.B.E.*, Vol. XI, pp. 3-4.
[7] *Vinaya Texts*, *S.B.E.*, Vol. XX, p. 408, f.n.

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regard to controversial topics. The disputes were settled by the votes of the majority and the voting was by ballot. The voting tickets (*śalākās*) were served out to the voters and an officer of approved honesty and impartiality was appointed to collect them. There was also the provision for taking votes of the members who could not for any reason be present at a meeting of the assembly.[1]

A quoram was required and difficulty was often experienced in getting the right number. The elaboration and perfection of the procedure as well as the use of so many technical names to designate each particular detail go to show that the organisations of these powerful assemblies had already been developed and elaborated among the political *saṅghas* like that of the Licchavis.[2] The chief Magistrate (Nāyaka) of the Licchavis of Vaiśālī was elected by the people or rather by the ruling clans of the Licchavis[3]. It is difficult to find out his functions but it is possible that he was an executive officer for carrying out the decisions of the assemblies.

In the city of Vaiśālī the Rājās permanently exercised the rights of sovereignty; there were 7707 *rājās* and quite as many uparājās or subordinate officials, *Senāpatis* or generals and Bhāṇḍāgārikas or treasurers.[4] All these rājās were given to arguments and disputations.[5] The number 7707 cannot be the right number of all the Licchavis living in the town of Vaiśālī. It seems to be an artificially concocted number. It would surely be too small a number for a great people that commanded respect for many centuries for their prowess and power and also it is too small a number for a people that filled almost the whole of such a large city of Vaiśālī. If stress is laid upon the fact that the viceroy, general, and treasurer were equal in number with the rājās, it would mean that each of them had a personal staff of these officers. It seems likely that the existence of a treasurer attached to each *rājā* necessarily implies that each *rājā* had his separate treasury.

There must have been officers among the Licchavis of Vaiśālī for recording the decisions of the Council. In the *Mahā-govinda Suttanta* of the *Dīghanikāya,* there is a passage which seems to justify this conclusion. The thirty-three gods assembled in the Hall of Good Counsel to discuss a certain matter. The four kings were receivers of the spoken words and the four great kings were receivers of the admonition given with respect to the matter under discussion.[6] It seems likely that the four great kings were looked upon as recorders; they kept the minutes of the meeting. In the case of the mote-halls of the clans there must have been such recorders.[7] Any practical work would have been impossible if there had not been any officer to record the proceedings of such a vast assembly as that of the Licchavis of Vaiśālī.

There was a tank the water of which was used at the coronation ceremony of the families of *gaṇarājās* of Vaiśālī.[8] It may be inferred from this fact that the ceremony of coronation was performed when a young Licchavi prince succeeded to the title and position of his father.

It is interesting to know the judicial procedure followed by the Vajjian confederacy of which the Licchavis of Vaiśālī were the most important members. When a person was presented before the

[1] Cf. *Mahāvagga*, *S.B.E.*, XIII, p. 277.
[2] D. R. Bhandarkar, *Carmichael Lectures* 1918, pp. 179-84.
[3] Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 62.
[4] *Jātaka* (Fausböll) I, p. 504.
[5] *Ibid.*, III, p. 1.
[6] *Dīghanikāya*, II.
[7] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II. p. 263 f.n. 1.
[8] *Jātaka*, Fausböll, IV, p. 148.

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Vajjian rājās as having committed an offence, they without taking him to be a malefactor surrendered him to the officers (*viniccaya-mahāmāttas*) whose business it was to make enquiries and examine the accused with a view to ascertain whether he was guilty or not. If they found that he was not a culprit, they released him. But if they considered him guilty they made him over to the persons learned in law and custom (*vohārikas*) without inflicting any punishment on him. They could discharge him if they found him innocent. If they held him guilty they transferred him to certain officers known as the *Suttadhāras* who kept up the thread of law and custom existing from the ancient times. They in their turn made further investigation and if satisfied that the accused was innocent they discharged him. If he was considered guilty by them, he was made over to the *Aṭṭhakulakā* (lit. the eight castes or tribes) which was evidently a judicial institution composed of judges representing eight tribes. The *Aṭṭhakulakā* made him over to the *Senāpati* or Commander of the army, if satisfied as to the guilt of the offender. The commander made him over to the Sub-king (*uparājā*) and the latter in his turn handed him over to the *rājā* who released the accused, if he was innocent. If he was found guilty the *rājā* referred to the *Paveṇipotthaka*, i.e., the Book recording the law and precedents. The *rājā* used to inflict a proper sentence having measured the culprit's offence according to the book of law and precedents.

There is no mention of the Licchavis in the Brāhmaṇa literature though there is repeated mention of Videha which in the Buddha's time joined with the Licchavis and formed a confederation. In the sixth century B.C., the Licchavis come to our notice in the Jaina and Buddhist books and we meet them there as a powerful people in the enjoyment of great prosperity and of a high social status among the ruling races of eastern India. They had already evolved a system of government and polity bearing not a little resemblance to some of the democracies of the western world, embodying all the latest methods of voting. The procedure of conducting the deliberations of an assembly must have been developing from the earliest Vedic times. The Licchavis must have modelled their procedure on that which was already in vogue among the Indo-Aryans, and adapted it to their own use. We know nothing of the history of the Licchavis of Vaiśālī during the period they grew up and developed into a noble and powerful people. The earliest political fact that we know of is that they gave one of their daughters in marriage to Śreṇika Bimbisāra, king of Magadha. The Licchavi lady was Cellanā, the daughter of Ceṭaka,[1] one of the rājās of Vaiśālī, whose sister Kṣatriyāṇī Triśalā was the mother of Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism. According to a Tibetan account, her name was Śrībhadrā and in some places her name occurs as Maddā.[2] This lady is usually called Vaidehī in the Buddhist books and from her Ajātaśatru is frequently designated as Vedehiputto[3] or the son of the Videha princess. The *Divyāvadāna*[4] also speaks of Ajātaśatru as Vaidehíputra. The Tibetan Dulva gives the name of Vāsavī to Ajātaśatru's mother, and narrates here a story which runs thus: A minister of king Virudhaka of Videha named Sakala was obliged to flee from his country on account of the jealousy of the other ministers of the king. He went to Vaiśālí with his two sons named Gopāla and Sinha. He became a prominent citizen of Vaiśālī and was elected a *Nāyaka*. His two sons married at Vaiśālí and Sinha had a daughter named Vāsavī. It was foretold that she would bear a son who

[1] *Jaina Sūtras, S.B.E.*, XXII, Intro. p. xiii.
[2] *Book of the Kindred Sayings*, I, p. 38, n. 1.
[3] *Saṃyutta*, II, p. 268.
[4] Cowell and Neill, p. 55.

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would take away his father's life. Gopāla was fierce and of great strength. He ravaged the parks of the Licchavis. When Sakala died, his son Sinha was elected a *Nāyaka* with the result that Gopāla left Vaiśālī and took up his residence at Rājagṛha in Magadha where he became the first minister of Bimbisāra. Bimbisāra afterwards married Vāsavī who became known as Vaidehī. After a while, she bore a son who received the name of Ajātaśatru.[1] Bimbisāra's son named Abhaya was born of a Licchavi woman. Bimbisāra visited Āmrapālī, a courtezan of Vaiśālī, and remained with her for seven days. Āmrapālī later became pregnant and gave birth to a son whom she sent to his father. This son was called Abhaya or fearless.[2]

The Licchavis appear to have been on friendly terms with king Prasenajit of Kosala. Prasenajit proceeded to arrest Aṅgulimāla the murderer and on his way he met the Buddha who enquired whether he was going to fight with Bimbisāra of Magadha or with the Licchavis of Vaiśālī. Thereupon Prasenajit replied that all of them were his friends.[3]

The Licchavis had friendly relations with their neighbours the Mallas. We next come to the relation of the Licchavis with Ajātaśatru, the son and successor of Bimbisāra. It cannot be expected that a man whose greed for power and position did override even the natural instinct of regard for his father's life, would show any tender feeling towards his mother's relation. Ajātaśatru must have felt from the very beginning that the Licchavis formed the greatest bar to the realisation of his idea of Magadhan expansion, and we find him taking the dreadful resolve, "I will root out these Vajjians, I will destroy these Vajjians. I will bring these Vajjians to utter ruin."[4] The Vajjians attacked Ajātaśatru many times. This enraged him very much, and in order to baffle their attempts, two of his ministers, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, built a fort at Pāṭaligāma[5] and at last Ajātaśatru annihilated the Vajjians. It was distinctly a political motive which led him to do so[6]. Ajātaśatru was not therefore on friendly terms with the Licchavis. His foster brother Abhaya had Licchavi blood in him and he liked the Licchavis very much. At this time the Licchavis were gradually gaining strength and Ajātaśatru thought that if Abhaya sided with them it would be very difficult for him to cope with the Licchavis. So he decided to do away with them. There was a port near the Ganges extending over a yojana, half of which belonged to Ajātaśatru and half to the Licchavis. There was a mountain not far from it and at the foot of the mountain there was a mine of precious substance. Ajātaśatru was late in coming there and the avaricious Licchavis took away all the precious substance. This enraged the Magadhan king very much. He realised that it would be difficult to carry out his purpose as the Licchavis were numerically stronger. So he conceived the design of destroying the independence of the Licchavis by sowing seeds of dissension. Ajātaśatru learnt from the Buddha through one of his ministers Vassakāra that the Licchavis would become very luxurious in future. So he decided to break up their union and Vassakāra advised him to convene a meeting of the Councillors to bring up some discussion regarding the Vajjians, when in the midst of the sitting, Vassakāra would quit the Council after offering a remonstrance saying, "Mahārāja, what do you want with them? Let them occupy themselves with the agricultural and commercial affairs of their own realm." Then he

[1] Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, pp. 63-64.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 64; Cf. *Psalms of the Sisters*, pp. 120-21; *Psalms of the Brethren*, p. 65.
[3] *Majjhima Nikāya*, II, pp. 100-101.
[4] *Buddhist Suttas*, *S.B.E.*, Vol. XI, pp. 1 and 2.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[6] Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 12.

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said to Ajātaśatru, "Mahārāja! completely cut off all my hair, bringing a charge against me for interdicting your discussion without either binding or flogging me. As I am the person by whom ramparts and ditches of your capital were formed and as I know the strong and weak parts of your fortification, I will tell the Vajjians that I am able to remove any obstacle you can raise." Ajātaśatru acted upto the advice of his minister. The Vajjians heard of the departure of Vassakāra who being questioned by them told them why he was so severely punished for so slight an offence. Then the Vajjians offered them the post of Judicial Prime Minister which he accepted and very soon acquired reputation for his able administration of justice. Young Vajjian rulers went to him to have their training at his hands. Vassakāra was very successful in his mission of creating disunion among the Vajjian rulers with the result that Ajātaśatru found it easy to defeat the Licchavis.[1] Thus the Magadhan kingdom was very much extended during his reign.

The Licchavis though they might have been forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of Magadha, enjoyed a great deal of independence under Candragupta Maurya. There can be no doubt that under his grandson Aśoka the Licchavis accepted his suzerainty.

At the beginning of the 4th century A.D., Candragupta I, a son-in-law of the Licchavi family and son of Ghaṭotkacagupta, established a new kingdom. A gold coin was introduced under the name of Candragupta I by Samudragupta. On the obverse were incised the figure of Candragupta I and his queen Kumāradevī and on the reverse was engraved the figure of Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, couchant with the legend *Licchavayaḥ* or the Licchavis.[2] Samudragupta in his Allahabad Inscription takes pride in describing himself as *Licchavi-dauhitra* or the son of the daughter of the Licchavis. About the 4th century A.D. when the Guptas rose to power, the Licchavis must have possessed considerable political power in north-eastern India. It is quite probable that Candragupta's dominions received considerable expansion by the country which he obtained through his Licchavi wife. Very likely it was the accession of the Licchavi districts to his kingdom that enabled him to adopt the title of *Mahārājādhirāja*. His son and successor wanted apparently to emphasise this fact by issuing a gold coin delineating the Licchavi connection. It is significant that the epithet "*Licchavi-dauhitra*" is not only asserted by Samudragupta about himself, but it continues to be a permanent appellation of this sovereign in the inscriptions of his successors. Allan presumes that it was to keep up the memory of his father Candragupta and his mother Kumāradevī that the coin bearing their names and the name of the Licchavis was issued by Samudragupta. Rapson points out that the inscription '*Licchavayaḥ*' which occurs in Candragupta's gold coins together with the name of his queen Kumāradevī may signify that Kumāradevī belonged to a royal family previously reigning at Pāṭaliputra.[3] A similar opinion is also held by V.A. Smith who says that Candragupta married Kumāradevī a princess of the Licchavi clan.[4] Candragupta's position was elevated through his Licchavi connections from the rank of a local chief.[5]

According to the Nepal inscriptions there were two distinct houses, one of which known as the Thākurī family, and the other the Licchavi or the Sūryavaṃśī family, which issued its charters

[1] G. Turnour, *An Examination of the Pali Buddhistical Annals*, No. V., *J.A.S.B.*, Dec., 1838, pp. 994 f.n.-996 f.n.
[2] Allan, *Gupta Coins*, pp. 8-11.
[3] *Indian Coins*, pp. 24-25.
[4] *Early History of India*, 3rd. Ed., p. 279.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 280.

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from the palace called Mānagṛha and uniformly used an era with the Gupta epoch.[1] Thus we find that the Licchavis were not inferior to the Imperial Guptas so far as rank and power were concerned.

Their friendly relations with the Guptas were established by the marriage of Candragupta I with Kumāradevī, a daughter of the Licchavis.

It is interesting to note that according to the Basārh seals the province of Tirhut was governed by prince Govinda Gupta, a son of the Emperor by the Mahādevī Śrī Dhruvasvāminī, who had his capital at Vaiśālī. The seals refer to many officials like the *Uparika* (governor), the *Kumārāmātya* (cadet minister), the *Mahāpratihāra* (the great Chamberlain), the *Talavara* (local chief), the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* (the great commandant), the *Vinayasthiti sthāpaka* (Censor) and the *Bhaṭāśvapati* (lord of the army and cavalry). Such offices as *Yuvarāja-pādīya Kumārāmāty-ādhikaraṇa* (office of the minister of the Crown prince), *Raṇabhāṇḍāgār-ādhikaraṇa* (chief treasurer of the war department), *Balādhikaraṇa* (war office), *Daṇḍapāśādhikaraṇa* (Police chief), *Tīra-bhukty-uparikādhikaraṇa* (office of the governor of Tirhut), *Tīrabhuktau Vinayasthiti-sthāpakādhikaraṇa* (office of the Censor of Tirhut), *Vaiśālyadhiṣṭhānādhikaraṇa* (office of the government of Vaiśālī) and *Śrī-paramabhaṭṭāraka-pād ya kumārāmāty-ādhikaraṇa* (office of the cadet minister waiting on His Majesty).[2]

IV. Social History

The Licchavis of Vaiśālī were sympathetic towards each other. If a Licchavi fell ill the other Licchavis came to see him. The whole clan would attend any auspicious ceremony performed in the house of a Licchavi. If a foreigner paid a visit to the Licchavi capital they would all go out in a body to receive him.[3]

The young Licchavis were very handsome in appearance and very fond of brilliant colours in their dress and equipages.[4] They wore various coloured garments not only on great festive occasions but in their ordinary daily life.[5] There was a profusion of gold and jewels in everything, in their equipages, carriages drawn by horses, gold-bedecked elephants, palanquins of gold set with all kinds of precious stones. There went out of the city of Vaiśālī twice 84,000 conveyances decked in pearl and gold with all the wealth and splendour of kings. All this speaks of a people who were greatly prosperous and in affluent circumstances and it may be expected that they would be given to luxury and indolence. This was not their character at the time when the Buddha lived and preached among them. They were hardy and active, ardent and strenuous in their military training.[6] They were fond of manly pastime, such as elephant-training and hunting.[7] According to the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, the Licchavi youths were rude and rough and whatever presents were sent to their families, they used to plunder and eat them. They used to throw dust at the ladies of respectable families and girls of good families. The young Vaiśālians though they indulged in the pranks and peccadillos of youth were not so wild as to lose all sense of respect due to religious men. The Licchavis were rather independent in their character and would not easily accept a subordinate position to any one

[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, p. 135.
[2] Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, 4th Edn., pp. 473-74.
[3] *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* (Burmese Ed.) pp. 103-5.
[4] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, II, p. 79.
[5] *Mahāvastu*, I, p. 259.
[6] *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, *P.T.S.*, II, pp. 267-8.
[7] *Psalms of the Brethren*, p. 106.

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whether in politics or in religion or in ordinary daily life.[1] A Licchavi named Vṛddha at the instigation of some dishonest bhikkhus had preferred a false charge of adultery against a Mallian but he afterwards made a clean breast of the whole ugly plot as soon as he saw the measure of his iniquity.[2]

The young Vaiśālians went to distant countries for education. Mahāli went to Taxila to learn arts and returned home after completing his education. He in his turn trained as many as 500 Licchavis who also did the same thing and in this way education spread far and wide among the Vaiśālians.

Fine arts were not neglected by the people of Vaiśālī. Artisans such as tailors, goldsmiths, and jewellers, must have been very much in requisition at the city of Vaiśālī to furnish the gay robes of many nobles. The artisans were put to great strain in order to devise suits of dress and ornaments to fit up variously coloured Licchavis. The art of architecture was also much developed in Vaiśālī.[3] They were equally enthusiastic in the building of temples, shrines, and monasteries, for the bhikkhus, and the bhikkhus themselves superintended the construction of these buildings for the Order.[4]

As regards the marriage rites of the Licchavis, there were rules, according to Tibetan books, restricting the marriage of all girls born in Vaiśālī to that city alone. The Vaiśālians made a law that a daughter born in the first district could marry only in the first district, and not in the second or third. No marriage was to be contracted outside Vaiśālī.[5] A Licchavi who wanted to marry could ask the corporation (*Licchavigaṇa*) to select a suitable bride for him.

The Vaśālians appear to have a high idea of female chastity. Violation of chastity was a serious offence amongst them. A Licchavi rājā was enamoured of the beauty of a married woman whose husband he engaged as an officer under him. He wanted to gain her love but in vain.[6]

The punishment for a woman who broke her marriage vow was very severe. The husband could with impunity even take away her life. An adulterous woman could save herself from punishment by entering the congregation of nuns by getting ordination.[7] A Licchavi wife committed adultery; the husband warned her many times but she heeded not. The corporation was informed by him that he would put an end to the life of his wife because she committed adultery. He then asked the corporation to select a suitable wife for him. His wife knowing that she would be killed became a nun.[8]

The Vaiśālians adopted various methods to dispose of the dead. Besides cremation and burial, the custom of exposing the dead to be devoured by wild animals seems to have been in existence in Vaiśālī. The Vaiśālians burnt corpses there and the bones were preserved in heaps. The corpses were hung from the trees; there were others buried there such as had been killed by their relatives fearing lest they should be born again, while others were left on the ground that they might return if possible to their former homes.[9] The custom of disposal of their dead bodies sometimes by ex-

[1] *Lalitavistara* (Lefmann), I, p. 21.
[2] *Vinaya Texts* (*S.B.E.*), III, pp. 118-125.
[3] *Lalitavistara*, Ch. III, p. 23.
[4] *Cullavagga*, VI, (*Vinaya Texts*, *S.B.E.*, Vol. XX, pp. 189-90).
[5] Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 62.
[6] *Petavatthu-aṭṭhakathā* (Simon Hewavitarana's Bequest Series, No. I), pp. 154-156.
[7] *Vinaya Piṭaka* (Oldenberg) IV, pp. 225-226.
[8] *Bhikkhunī-vibhaṅga-saṅghādidesa*, II, p. 225.
[9] Beal, *Romantic Legend of Śākya Buddha*, pp. 159-60.

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posure, sometimes by cremation, and sometimes by burial, was in vogue among the inhabitants of Vaiśālī.[1]

The Vaśālians had various festivals of which the *Sabbarattivāra* (whole night festival) or *Sabbaratticāra* was the most important. At the *Sabbarattivára* festival songs were sung, trumpets, drums and other musical instruments were used.[2] When a festival took place at Vaiśālī, all the people used to enjoy it and there were dancing, singing and recitation.[3]

V. *Religious History*

The Vaiśālians especially the Licchavis of Vaiśālī were of a strongly religious and devotional bent of mind. Both Jainism and Buddhism found many followers among them. Before the advent of these two religions, the Licchavis or to call them by their wider designation, the Vajjians, appear to have been imbued with a strong religious spirit and deep devotion. They had many shrines in their town as well as in their country and they worshipped the deities in the shrines with proper offerings and with the observance of due rites and ceremonies. Even after Jainism and Buddhism had obtained a strong hold on the Licchavis of Vaiśālī, the great body of the people of the Vajji country remained staunch followers of their ancient faith, the principal feature of which was Caitya worship, although they had due regard for the Jain or Buddhist sages, that wandered over their country, preaching the message delivered by their respective teachers. The Buddha on the eve of his last departure for Vaiśālī and shortly before his passing away from this world said, "As long as the Vajjians honour the Vajjian shrines in town or country, so long the Vajjians are expected not to decline but to prosper".[4] Towards the end of the Buddha's life, the Licchavis were devoted worshippers at the numerous shrines scattered about their country. From the meagre mention of the *Caityas* of the Licchavis in the Buddhist books, it is not easy to determine what the principal objects of their worship were. There is nothing to show that the religious belief of the Licchavis was in any way different from the form of faith obtained in other parts of northern India. The important *Caityas* at Vaiśālī were called *Cāpāla*, *Udena*, *Gotamaka*, *Bahuputta*, *Sattambaka*, *Sārandada*,[5] and *Gotama-nigrodha*. From the comments made by the celebrated commentator, Buddhaghosa, it is reasonable to assume that the *yakkhas* were worshipped in these *Caityas*. The Buddhist books point out that the Vedic and many popular gods and goddesses were worshipped by the people in the region where Buddha preached.[6]

According to the Jaina Ācārāṅga Sūtra, Mahāvīra's parents were the lay supporters of the followers of Pārśvanātha. For the sake of protecting the six classes of lives, they observed the rules of continence and committed religious suicide through starvation.[7]

After Mahāvīra developed his doctrine and preached his faith of unbounded charity to all living beings in the Vajji land and in Magadha, the number of his followers among the Licchavis appears to have been large and some men of the highest position in Vaiśālī appear to have been among them. According to the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, Sīha, a Licchavi general, gradually felt attracted towards

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXXII, p. 234.
[2] *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, I, pp. 201-2.
[3] *Psalms of the Brethren*, p. 63.
[4] *Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta*, *Dīgha* II.
[5] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. III, p. 14—*Pāṭika Suttanta*; Cf. *Divyāvadāna*, p. 201.
[6] *Saṃyutta*, I, pp. 1, 3, 10, etc., *Mahāparinibbāṇa Suttanta*, VI, 15, etc., etc.
[7] *Jaina Sūtras*, I, *S.B.E.*, XXII, p. 194.

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the Śramaṇa Gautama by listening to the discussion among the Licchavis at their mote-hall. Sīha was afterwards converted to the Buddhist faith.[1] Saccaka, a Nigaṇṭha, had the hardihood to challenge the Buddha himself to a discussion on philosophical tenets before an assembly of 500 Licchavis.[2]

The Buddha paid several visits to the city of Vaiśālī and from the beginning he appears to have met with great success. How great was the veneration with which he was received on his first visit to this city. The Licchavis sought the aid of the Buddha for the solution of many problems about religion and dogma that presented any difficulty to them.

Once when the Buddha was staying in the Kūṭāgāraśālā at Mahāvana in Vaiśālī, Bhaddiya, a Licchavi, paid a visit to the Buddha who explained to him *Kusala* and *akusala dhamma*. Bhaddiya was much delighted with his exposition and declared himself a follower of the Buddha.[3] A Licchavi named Sālha and another Licchavi named Abhaya went to the Buddha and heard his preachings.[4] A Licchavi minister named Nanda approached the place where the Blessed One was and the Buddha explained to him the four *dhammas*.[5] When the Buddha was at Vaiśālī, five hundred Licchavis assembled at the Sārandada Cetiya. There was talk about the five kinds of rare gems.[6]

Anjana-vaniya, a Vaiśālian, went to the Buddha and heard his discourse with the result that he won arhatship[7]. A son of a Licchavi rājā at Vaiśālī went to the place where the Buddha was preaching. Hearing his discourse he entered the Order and in due course acquired supernatural knowledge[8]. Jentā, born in a princely family of the Licchavis at Vaiśālī, won arhatship after hearing the dhamma preached by the Buddha.[9] Vāsiṭṭhī who belonged to a clansman's family at Vaiśālī was taught by the Master about the outlines of the Norm. She soon acquired insight and attained arhatship.[10] Ambapālī, known as the Mango-gardener's girl, tried to acquire insight.[11] The evanescence of her own body was noticed by her and she saw transitoriness in every phenomenon of the universe. At last she attained arhatship.[12] A large number of distinguished Licchavis while going to see the Buddha when he was at Vaiśālī, resounded the Mahāvana with a great tumult of joy to see the Buddha as they were greatly devoted to him.[13] Mahāli, a Licchavi, went to the Buddha and told him that Pūraṇa Kassapa, a heretical teacher, was of opinion that there was no cause of the sin of beings and without cause they suffered, and there was no cause of the purity of beings and without cause they were purified. The Buddha refuted this theory of Pūraṇa Kassapa.[14]

The influence that teachings of the Exalted One exercised upon the fierce Licchavis is unique. The magic power of the wholesome and edifying discourse of the Blessed One had the beneficial effect of removing the arrogance and selfishness of a wicked Licchavi prince from the core of his

1 *Vinaya Texts* (*S.B.E.*, XVII), 108 foll.
2 *Majjhima*, I, pp. 227-237.
3 *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, II, pp. 190-4.
4 *Ibid.*, II, 200-2.
5 *Saṁyutta*, V. pp. 389-90.
6 *Aṅguttara*, III, 167-8.
7 *Psalms of the Brethren*, p. 56.
8 *Ibid.*, p. 106.
9 *Psalms of the Sisters*, pp. 23-24.
10 *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.
11 *Psalms of the Sisters*, pp. 120-121.
12 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
13 *Aṅguttara*, V, p. 133.
14 *Majjhima*, III, pp. 68-70.

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heart which became afterwards full of love and kindness.[1]

The independent spirit of the Vajjians was manifested notably in the great schism brought about by the bhikkhus in their clan in the life of the Buddhist Order. Their national spirit was also displayed in bringing about a momentous change in the Buddhist doctrine. A school of Buddhist thought known as the *Vajjiputtakas* is said to have formulated a theory of personality (*puggalavāda*) which was unacceptable to the orthodox interpreters of Buddhism.

A hundred years after the passing away of the Buddha the *Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus*, who were the residents of Vaiśālī, began to indulge in practices prejudicial to the interests of Buddhism. They proclaimed ten indulgences as permissible.[2] In order to suppress the heresies among them, the Buddhist elders convened a council at Vaiśālī known as the *Sattasatika* or the convocation of the seven hundred. At this meeting the assembled bhikkhus were brought together by the exertions of the venerable Yasa. In the course of discussions, the interrogation of Revata and the exposition of the Vinaya by Sabbakāmi, the ten indulgences being thoroughly enquired into, a judgment of suppression was finally pronounced.[3]

[1] *Ekapaṇṇa Jātaka* (Cowell's Ed.), I, p. 16.
[2] Kern, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 103; *J.A.S.B.*, VI, Pt. II, p. 728 (1837)..
[3] *An Examination of the Pali Buddhistical Annals*, VI, Pt. II, p. 729 *J.A.S.B.*, 1837; (Sept.)

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VAIŚĀLĪ AND GREATER INDIA

Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D., P.R.S., F.R.A.S.B.

It is quite in the fitness of things that there should be an organization to pay homage to, and thereby keep alive the memories of, the glorious city of Vaiśālī. The city played a distinguished part in the history of India and several writers have described in this volume its many-sided achievements. I would only like to add a few words to show that the name and fame of this ancient city lingered in the memory of Indians who had set up colonies in Burma.

Vaiśālī was the name of a famous city in Arakan. According to the local chronicles it was built in 789 A.D. by a king of the Chandra dynasty, and henceforth became its capital. This tradition is fully supported by the coins and inscriptions of a long line of kings whose names ended in Chandra. For two centuries, if not more, Vaiśālī retained its position as a capital city and a stronghold of Indian culture, specially of Buddhism.

The palace of the city is now occupied by the village Wethāli, which is only the local pronunciation of Vaiśālī. Thus the old name still survives in an insignificant village in the Akyab district. It is 8 miles to the south-east of Mrohaung or Myohaung, the well-known capital of Arakan in the 15th and 16th centuries A.D.

Wethāli or Vaiśālī is now a small village containing about 80 houses. But it is strewn all over with brickbats and there are still remains of extensive brick walls. The old moat of the royal palace can still be seen running along the north of the village. To judge from the extant ruins, the city must have been a fairly large one. A number of sculptures, some with inscriptions, have been found in the locality, and a few of them may be as early as the 8th century A.D. These sculptures are predominantly Buddhist in character. A long line of Buddhist kings, as noted above, is referred to in an inscription engraved on a pillar which is now in Shitthaung temple at Mrohaung. It gives an account of the Śrī-Dharmarājānuja-vaṁśa and records the names of 19 kings who probably ruled between 600 and 1000 A.D. Most of these kings have names ending in Chandra such as Bālachandra, Devachandra, Yajñachandra, Dīpachandra, Prītichandra, Nītichandra, Narendrachandra and Ānandachandra. The other kings of this family were Mahāvīra, Dharmaśūra, Dharma-vijaya and Narendra-vijaya.

Whether the capital city of Vaiśālī in Arakan had any relation with the ancient city of Vaiśāli in India, it is, of course, impossible to say. But we have other evidences to show that the name and fame of ancient Vaiśālī loomed large in the minds of the Burmese people. The Burmese chronicles have preserved a long story about the marriage of Aniruddha, the great king of Pagan (1044-1077 A.D.), with a princess of Vaiśālī. The Burmese king, we are told, sent an envoy to the ruler of Vaiśālī, in India, asking for the hands of his daughter. The ruler of Vaiśālī agreed and the princess was escorted by a noble man of the Burmese court with due pomp and ceremony. Scandalous stories about the relation between the princess and her escort reached the ears of the king, but after some

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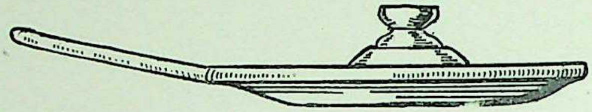
hesitation, he married her. The queen gave birth to a son who later ascended the throne under the name of Kyantsittha, and attained great fame. This traditional account may or may not be true, but it at least proves that the Buddhist people of Burma had great respect for Vaiśālī and held it in high honour.



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THE PRE-BUDDHISTIC ANCIENT HISTORICAL TRADITIONS OF THE VAIŚĀLĪ REGION

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About seven or eight generations before the Ailas and Aikṣvākas started their respective famous dynasties (with the main branches at Pratiṣṭhāna or Prayāga and at Ayodhyā), that is about ninety generations before the Bhārata War (which took place in the middle of the tenth century B.C. when the last edition of the Vedic texts was being drawn up by Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyaṇa),—in other words, near about the twenty-third century B.C., in the concluding epoch of the so-called 'Mohenjo-Daro' or pre-Āryan (pre-'Aila') civilization (cir. 3,750 to 2,000 B.C.),—a large part of northern India, including Himālayan and Gangetic regions, began to be ruled over not by 'kings' but by chosen 'Manu's (=Mentors or Monitors, Planners or 'Law-givers'). In about two centuries, from the twenty-third to the twenty-first, there were six 'Manu's, most of whom belonged to one family, that of the first Manu and his son, Priyavrata.—The first mention of the Vaiśālī region in ancient historical tradition occurs in connexion with the episodes recorded in the Purāṇas regarding the 'Manu's of this family and period.

The first Manu's grandson, the famous Uttāna-pāda, had by his second consort a son called Uttama, who was married to Behulā of the Bābhravya family. She was a great beauty, but did not respond to Uttama's love; tired of her coldness, he banished her. One of his subjects, Suśarman, a brāhmaṇa of Viśāla town, had a plain-looking shrew for a wife (the daughter of Atirātra, a brāhmaṇa), who was kidnapped by a handsome 'Rākṣasa' (named Valāka, son of Adri) of Utpalāvata[1] (i.e., Pratiṣṭhāna City): and he appealed to Uttama for her recovery; Uttama did this service and the abductor Valāka became his friend. In the meanwhile, his own banished wife was abducted by a Nāga king, Kapotaka, to 'Pātāla' regions (apparently the Ganges delta), where however she was saved by the Nāga king's daughter, Nandā, who concealed her and feigned being struck with dumbness, in the interests of the Queen, her mother. With the help of Valāka, Uttama now rescued Behulā, who fully responded to her husband's love, and the pair continued to enjoy the favour of the Nāga princess Nandā, who blessed their son, the famous 'Auttami or the second Manu.'[2]

[1] I.e., Prayāga (Allahabad). There is a 'ghāṭ' called Brahmāvartta at Prayāga associated with Uttānapāda, who is also said to have ruled Brahmāvartta between Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī,—which would rather mean the Sarasvatī flowing into Prayāga and the Dṛṣadvatī or 'stone-bearing' Gaṇḍakī;—there was also a Sarasvatī beside Vaiśālī. Utpalāvata is now a ruined fort on the Ganges, said to represent the ruins of the city of Uttānapāda. Some identify it with Bithur, 14 miles from Cawnpore, which is also called Utpalāraṇya (but this may be different from Utpalāvata).—Utpalāraṇya was also the name of Vālmīki's āśrama where Lava and Kuśa were born,—which was however at the junction of Tamasā (Tons) and the Ganges below Pratiṣṭhāna (Allahabad). *This* Utpalāraṇya might represent Uttānapāda's Utpalāvata better. According to Mahābhārata: V.P., Utpalāraṇya was within the kingdom of Pāñcāla then. The Rāmagaṅgā river is known as Uttānikā after him, and it falls into the Ganges at the Utpalāraṇya near Kanauj.

[2] These details, tersely summarised here, indicate that the lower Gangetic country (from Allahabad to the sea)

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In the same line of Uttānapāda there was a prince, Anamitra, and his wife Giri-bhadrā, whose son, Ānanda, was in childhood changed for the infant son named Caitra of another neighbouring prince,[1] Vikrānta, and his wife Haiminī (daughter of Rūtha), who again was changed for the infant son of Bodha, the leading brāhmaṇa of Viśāla-grāma,[1]—the last infant being consigned to the famale deity 'Jāta-hāriṇī.' When still a mere youth, Ānanda became the sixth Manu (the 'Cākṣuṣa' Manu)[2]; by his wife 'Vidarbhā', daughter of King Ugra, he had a son called Uru, whose immediate descendants were the famous Aṅga, Veṇa and Pṛthu.

In the same lineage of the first Manu, within the first few generations from him, are placed the famous Ṛṣabha (one of the very first 'Jina's of Jaina tradition) and his son Bharata. The former was ruler over what was then known as 'Hima-varṣa', the country just to the south of what was then called 'Hima' Mountains ('Himāhva'). This region he made over to his son Bharata and retired in old age as an ascetic, wandering, but with head-quarters in the ancient āśrama of the 'Pulaha' brāhmaṇas (of the same group as the Pulastya='rākṣasa' and 'yakṣa', Kratu, Agastya and Vāśiṣṭha brāhmaṇas) at Śāla-grāma on the Gaṇḍakī (above Vaiśālī where the river emerges from the Himālayas). Bharata gave his name to this Hima-varṣa, and after him it was called Bhārata-varṣa. He too, in due course, retired like his father before him to the same āśrama, making over this region to his son Sumati. Other cousins of Ṛṣabha and Bharata,—Nābhi, Agnīdhra, and others,—ruled over regions or 'varṣa's called Nābhi-varṣa, Ilāvṛta-varṣa, Kiṃpurusa-varṣa, Hari-varṣa, etc., mostly in the different Himālayan and trans-Himālayan tracts. This Bharata was also a great ṛṣi or sage, and is alleged to have been the originator of the first scientific treatment of the dramatic art, music and dancing (Nāṭya-śāstra).

Legends about a very ancient cult struggle of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava character between the worshippers of Aja-Ekapāda (Rudra in elephant form) and of Kūrma (tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu) are located in the Vaśālī region, at the junction of the Gaṇḍakī and the Gaṅgā, which is therefore called Hari-Hara-Kṣetra or Gajendra-Mokṣa-Kṣetra, within Viśāla-Kṣetra. Three other ancient legends about this same region concern (*i*) the origin of Diti's sons, the Maruts (gods associated with Indra, being the stormy winds of the sea or 'mare' and the swampy riparian regions or 'maru'); (*ii*) the 'Manthana' ('scouring', mistranslated 'churning') of the Eastern Seas by the 'Maruts' and others, with Mt. Mandara (in the Aṅga region) as the seat of the 'Daṇḍa' or the ruling power supporting the Vaiśālī sea-rangers; and (*iii*) Śiva, Umā and the conflagration of Madana (Cupid), whence this same region was also called Kāmāśrama. Of these, the first and third legends are based on early religious history, the second on early commercial history,—all clearly belonging to the age before 2,000 B.C.

Coming, in this same south Himālayan Gangetic region, to the next great epoch of the rise of the

in those days was inhabited in the west by a very handsome 'rākṣasa' race and in the east by an equally handsome 'Nāga' race, amongst which latter the ruling families evinced matriarchal traces. The names Behulā (colloq. form of 'Vidhurā' or 'Virahiṇī', 'the separated maid') and Kapotaka are strongly reminiscent of the Bengal legends *re* Behulā and the Nāgas,—and of the Bengal river named Kapotak (one of the branches of the Deltaic Ganges, in Jessore district, on which the famous Michael Madhusudan Dutt's home village stood, and where in archaic times the great sage Kapila lived).

[1] It seems both were 'raja's of Vaisali. (Cf. many 'raja's of Vaisali in later ages).—In early literature capital cities were designated 'grāma's, e.g., Ayodhyā.

[2] The legends about the Svārocisa Manu and the Raivata Manu of the same dynasty connect them with Vārāṇasī then called Varuṇāspada or Varaṇāsi-pada (and a kingdom extending from Upper Gangetic Himālayas to Kāmarūpa and Deccan), and with 'Vikramaśila' respectively. The sub-Himālayan 'Mauleya's, whose princess was married into the Manu family, might be the prototype of the subsequent Mauryas.

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Ikṣvākus (which was shortly after followed by the advent of the Ailas or Āryans into the Madhyadeśa through the north-west, that is middle Himālayas),—that is, in the period following 2,000 B. C.,—we find one of the numerous Ikṣvāku groups settled in the Vaiśālī region, known as Nābha or Nābhāga 'Nediṣṭa' or the Junior Nābhas (with reference to another Nābha group of the Ikṣvākus further west). According to Harivaṃśa (11, 658), two princes of this clan though Vaiśyas became Brāhmaṇas. According to Bhāgavata Purāṇa (9, ii, 17), though Kṣatriyas they attained Brāhmaṇahood. The Purāṇas generally agree that Nābhāga, a descendant of the Nābhāga-Nediṣṭa Ikṣvāku clan, was degraded from Kṣatriya status to be a Vaiśya, but he and his descendants had three statuses indiscriminately. The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa in its latter part deals entirely with this Vaiśya dynasty of Vaiśālī, the details given referring to the period between the famous 'Vedic' princes Divodāsa and Pratardana (and the Haihaya-Bhārgava wars) and Bharata-Ḍauṣyanti and Bharadvāja-Vidathin, that is, approximately between 1,500 and 1,300 B.C.

A summary of this history of "the Farmer and Saint Kings of Vaiśālī", from Ariṣṭa and Nābhāga to Vatsa, and of "the Emperors of Vaiśālī", from Karandhama to Dama(na) and Rāṣṭra-vardhana, is given below.

King Ariṣṭa's son Nābhāga met a Vaiśya farmer's daughter and fell in love with her. Desiring to marry her, he approached the girl's father who, however, argued incompatibility and other reasons. The farmer further reported to the King, who summoned Ṛcīka-Bhārgava and other brāhmaṇas for consultation and a ruling on the points raised: they gave it, permitting the marriage *after* marriage with a 'princess.' Nābhāga rejected this on principle, and carried off the farmer's daughter, Suprabhā by name, resorting to the 'Rākṣasa' form of marriage. The farmer reported the occurrence. The King sent an army against the defiant son, but it was routed, whereupon he himself took the field and fought his son. In this crisis a 'parivrājaka muni' intervened, ruled that since Nābhāga had become a Vaiśya by marriage with a Vaiśyā (which was voluntary on both sides), the war should stop, for, by the laws of warfare, Kṣatriyas fight only with Kṣatriyas, and thereby prevented the fatal conflict. Thus the King became reconciled to his son and daughter-in-law and brought them to Court, but Nābhāga persisted in leading the Vaiśya life of agriculture and trade; and this was also ultimately ruled by the King's advisers headed by Bābhravya-Kauśika. The 'farmer' Nābhāga's son, Bhā-nandana or Bhalandana, exhorted by his mother Suprabhā, tried to recover the paternal kingdom with the help of Rājarṣi Nīpa (probably of Kāmpilya), then residing in retirement in a Himavat āśrama, who gave him necessary arms and military training. Hereafter Bhā-nandana went to Vasurāta and others, Nābhāga's younger brother's sons, and demanded half the kingdom which they refused to give as he was a Vaiśya. He then worsted them in war, wrested the whole kingdom, and offered the 'two crowns' to his parents. But Nābhāga refused it, giving his reasons in detail. Suprabhā however supported her son, now disclosing that Nābhāga had not really become a Vaiśya, for she herself was very truly a Kṣatriyā.

Her story was as follows :

King Suḍeva (apparently of Kāśī, who fought and lost a war with the Vītahavyas, and was father of Divodasa II of Kāśī), together with his friend Nala (son of Dhūmrāśva and apparently a prince of the Vaiśālī region) visited Āmra-vana (Āmāwān ?) and a lake there, to sport with women and wine. While drunk, Nala caught hold of (Cyavana-Bhārgava's descendant) Pramati's wife (a princess as well as a temple dancer, 'apsaras'). Pramati appealed to the inert Sudeva to save her, but he dec-

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lined, saying he was a Vaiśya. Pramati in a fury struck down Nala and cursed Sudeva with expulsion from kingship and degradation to Vaiśyahood, relenting subsequently only to the extent that Sudeva could be restored to his original status if a daughter of his were married, by a recognised Kṣatriya form of marriage, to a Kṣatriya prince. Subsequently, Sudeva as a Vaiśya farmer became Suprabhā's father.

The episode was further cleared to Nābhāga in this way:

Sudeva, also called Suratha, at first retired from his throne as a 'rājarṣi' and resided in an āśrama called Gandhamādana. There he met a girl, Sārikā, 'dropped' (abandoned) by 'Vāja-Cañcu',—apparently the same as the contemporary Ikṣvāku prince, Vijaya-Cañcu. Overcome with pity for Sārikā, he befriended her, and Suprabhā was his daughter by her. As Suprabhā grew up in this āśrama (of the Agastyas), she and her companions offended its Agastya chief, and her father's Vaiśya-hood (not so far given effect to) was confirmed and made compulsory by his curse; but concession was made for her to the extent that striving for attainment of royalty for her husband and son, she (Suprabhā) could yet return to her Kṣatriyā status. As against all these explanations, Nābhāga put forward further reasons for sticking to his Vaiśya-hood and remaining a farmer, and suggested that as such he would pay taxes to his son, who might become king by virtue of conquest.

His view prevailing, Bhā-nandana became king, and in course of time proved to be a very righteous and religious ruler, known to posterity as a Ṛg-Vedic Ṛṣi, like his father. He retired to Vānaprastha in old age, and his son and successor was Vatsa or Vatsa-Prī (Vatsa the Beloved), also a great monarch of ideal character. He had twelve sons (Prāṃśu and others, named in the Mārk° Pur°) by his queen Saunandā, daughter of the Yādava king Vidūratha, whose capital was on the river Nirvindhyā in Mālava, and a daughter in whose direct line, named Māninī, became queen of Rājya-vardhana, a successor of Vatsa.

The following episode is related about the romance of Vatsa and Saunandā:

Vatsa gained her by slaying the Daitya (Asura) king Kujṛmbha of 'Rasātala' or 'Pātāla.' A big tunnel near Vidūratha's capital on the bank of the Nirvindhyā led to Kujṛmbha's fortress. Vidūratha, afraid of Kujṛmbha's power, sought counsel of his ministers. Mudāvatī, the king's daughter, overheard the consultations, and came to know of the vital defect in the mysterious irresistible weapon of Kujṛmbha,—that a woman's touch spoiled its efficacy for a day. Soon Mudāvatī was kidnapped by Kujṛmbha from a suburban park of the capital city; her two brothers fought the abductor at the tunnel, but were captured. King Vidūratha proclaimed in his capital as well as abroad that Mudāvatī would be given in marriage to whosoever rescued her and her brothers. Bhā-nandana's son Vatsa (-Prī) responded to this call of his father's friend, and when he arrived he was also promised his throne if he succeeded. Mudāvatī espied the adventurer into her captor's stronghold, and loved him; she spoilt the Daitya's war-arm, called 'Sunanda', by her touch, so that when Kujṛmbha used it against the advancing Vatsa, it could do nothing, and he was killed after a great fight. The Daitya or Asura Kujṛmbha's fall led to restoration of the sovereignty of the Nāgas in that region (belonging to the Śeṣa or Ananta clan), and the gratified Nāgas gave the appelation of 'Saunandā' to Mudāvatī. Vatsa then presented her and her two brothers to Vidūratha, who made him his son-in-law and apparently also his successor,—so that at least for a generation Vaiśālī held sway over Mālava. It seems that Vatsa also succeeded to the Kāśī throne at the same time. He was the son of the Kāśī king Sudeva's daughter's son (Bhā-nandana): after Sudeva in the Kāśī line we have Divodāsa II (half-

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brother of Suprabhā) and his son, the famous Pratardana (who too were Ṛg-Vedic Ṛṣis like their cousins of Vaiśālī); after Pratardana the Kāśī list shows Vatsa. Vatsa (-Prī) composed the Ṛg-Vedic hymns IX, 68 and X, 45 and 46, and like his two predecessors is counted by the Purāṇas amongst Vaiśyas who were also brāhmaṇas (besides being Kṣatriyas).

After him comes a somewhat confused period in the dynastic and political history of Vaiśālī [as also in that of Kāśī, where after Alarka, Vatsa's successor, the kingdom is overrun by many forces, —so that the Turvaśas of Rewā could be on the Gomatī river (or Jaunpur-Ghazipur region) in the time of Karandhama, who also came to rule over Vaiśālī]. This confusion is shown by the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa omitting altogether the names in the dynastic list from Prāṃśu to Avīkṣit; these names are shadowy, except in one or two cases, where the details indicate a break-up of the kingdom, and the advent of a new ruling family grafted on to the previous decadent line. It is, therefore, probable that the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa is right in regarding Avīkṣit as being in the generation next to Vatsa.

It appears that there was another local princely family, also belonging to the Ikṣvāku group, and descended from an earlier 'Prāṃśu' (than the one who was a son of Vatsa-prī), who was one of eight brothers of Ikṣvāku, son of Manu, and that this family ruled somewhere in the same Vaiśālī region. In this line one Khanitra, who seems to be the same as Khanīnetra (placed lower in the list), had great troubles with his possessions which were rent by revolts. As he was issueless, these possessions of his passed to Karandhama of the Turvaśa dynasty (probably of the Rewā and the Gomatī regions), by way of his adoption into this secondary Vaiśālika family. This Karandhama carried out a wide conquest and levied tribute on defeated princes, who revolted in concert but were crushed. With 'Karandhama' (a title,—his earlier proper names being Suvarcas, Balāśva, Balākāśva and Suvalāśva) begins a fresh powerful Vaiśāleya dynasty, an imperial, wide-ruling one, which left its stamp on the general history of ancient India.

Before coming to this imperial history of Vaiśālī, the details of this aforesaid 'minor' Vaiśālī dynasty ending with Khanitra-Khanīnetra,—who apparently comes into prominence in the Vaiśālī region just after Vatsa (and his overlordship over Kāśī and Mālava) passes out of the picture,—may be summarised as follows :

In the (ancient) line of Prāṃśu arose Khanitra, an orthodox 'Vedic', pacific, powerful and dutiful king. In good faith he gave four of his provinces to his four brothers as their principalities, —Śauri, the East province, with Suhotra Ātreya as chaplain; Sunaya, the West province, with Pramati Kāśyapa as chaplain; Mahāratha, the North, with a Vāśiṣṭha chaplain; and Udāvasu, the South, with Kuśāvartha Gautama as chaplain. Śauri's minister, Viśvavedin, gave shrewd political advice to him, urging him to capture the overlordship of Khanitra (since sub-division of land leads nowhere), and overcame his scruples. Then this minister contrived to bring the other brothers and their ministers under the leadership of Śauri. All these combined sent a big force against Khanitra, who however was influential enough to win back the rebel armies and turn them against the conspirators. The conspiring priests met their death, which upset the pious Khanitra and, in remorse for the great slaughter, he renounced the throne and went into 'vānaprastha' with his three wives. It is further stated that Khanīnetra of this line,—apparently the same as Khanitra above,—was a great sacrificer and, while hunting deer for sacrificial flesh, was converted to 'ahiṃsā' by the self-immolation of a deer (cf. Buddhist Jātaka parallels). Thereupon the childless Khanīnetra, abandoning animal sacrifice, obtained a son,—evidently an adopted one,—from the region of the Gomatī river, by his own

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efforts. This successor was the famous 'Karandhama' of the Turvaśa family.

Other princes in the Vaiśālī region are also named for this 'gap between Vatsa and Karandhama.' These names are Kṣupa, who increased the number of brāhmaṇa farmers and herdsmen in his state, and by gifts indirectly returned to them the taxes they paid; Vīra or Viṃśa, that is 'the twentieth', who married in the Vidarbha dynasty like several other Vaiśālika princes. This group, beginning with Kṣupa and counting twenty-two ('viviṃśa) princes (mostly un-named), is clearly a separate family belonging to the same Vaiśālī country, descended from another 'early' Ikṣvāku, namely Kṣupa, like the one descended from Prāṃśu (as related before), and is inserted by later chroniclers in the break between Vatsa ('Nābhāgi'-Ikṣvāku or Mānva) and Karandhama (Turvaśa or Aila). The grafting of Karandhama evidently represents the introduction of an Āryan,—Aila,—element into the midst of the Ikṣvāku or Mānva region of Vaiśālī,—comparable to the advent of another Āryan group of the Eastern Ānavas, into Aṅga, Vaṅga, etc., near about this same period.

With Karandhama and Avīkṣit we leave the times of the kings who synthesized pacifism and priest-lore, farming and agriculture and knightly chivalry; and we come now to the times of ruthless, martial, conquering and wide-ruling emperors.

Karandhama-Taurvaśi of the Revā and the Gomatī region, who was grafted into the Vaiśālika dynasty, carried out, as has already been said, a wide conquest and levied tributes; but the defeated princes (evidently Ikṣvāku remnants of the Vaiśālī region) combined to revolt, and besieged his capital. Karandhama however broke up the siege of Vaiśālī, and was chosen in 'svayamvara' by Vīrā, the daughter of Prince Vīra or Vīra-candra, one of the chiefs of Vaiśālī (referred to before). His right to the Vaiśālī region was thus further legitimatised; their son Avīkṣita-Kārandhama ('Avīkṣita' has the same meaning as 'Avalokiteśvara') was a famous king, highly extolled in the Mahābhārata (Aśvamedha-Parva) which says that he was assisted by an Āṅgirasa 'purohita' and flourished at the beginning of the Tretā age, at the close of which Rāma-Dāśarathi lived.

Avīkṣit was highly accomplished and was chosen at their 'svayamvara's by seven princesses successively, namely (*i*) Varā, daughter of Prince Hema-dharma (probably the same as Hema-candra, a prince of Vaiśālī); (*ii*) Gaurī, daughter of Sudeva (probably a daughter of 'the family of Sudeva' of Kāśī, ancestor of Vatsa-prī of Vaiśālī); (*iii*) Subhadrā, daughter of King Valin of Aṅga, Vaṅga, etc. (a contemporary of Avīkṣit and Marutta and their priest, Saṃvartta); (*iv*) Līlāvatī, daughter of Prince Vīra, and therefore Avīkṣit's mother's sister or half-sister; (*v*) Anibhā, daughter of Vīra-bhadra (apparently the same as Vīra or Vīra-candra above, and thus another sister or half-sister of Avīkṣit's mother); (*vi*) Mānyavatī, daughter of King Bhīma, apparently 'Kratha'-Bhīma of Vidarbha, a contemporary of Karandhama and Avīkṣit; and (*vii*) Kumudvatī, daughter of Dambha (said to be a successor of the Asura Kujṛmbha of Mālava, who was a contemporary of Karandhama's predecessor Vatsa, as described before). Of these the first, second, fourth and fifth marriages were calculated to strengthen legitimacy in Vaiśālī; the third to strengthen association with the Āṅgirasa priests, who all along controlled the career of Karandhama's line for six generations after him, and who also controlled Valin's big kingdom in the east; and the sixth and seventh marriages were to continue the previous Vaiśālika connexion with Vidarbha and Mālava. Those princesses who did not choose him at their 'svayamvara's, Avīkṣit forcibly carried off by fighting rival princes. This high-handedness produced a catastrophe, when he seized Vaiśālinī, daughter of King 'Viśāla' of Vaiśālī.

The details of this romantic episode are as follows :

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At the 'svayamvara' of 'Vaiśālinī' (that is, the princess of Vaiśālī), daughter of King 'Viśāla' of Vaidiśa[1] (wrong for Vaideha or Vaiśālī), Avīkṣita seized her as she passed him by, defeating other resisting kings. These latter however combined, rallied and jointly attacked the single-handed Avīkṣita, captured him by unfair fight and entered Vaidiśa (that is, Vaideha or Vaiśālī) city along with King Viśāla. The princess Vaiśālinī, still waiting to complete her 'svayamvara', was asked repeatedly to choose her mate from among the victors, but she declined; the astrologers too evaded specifying an auspicious day for (formal) marriage, knowing the real state of her mind. Karandhama, his Vaiśālian queen Vīrā and their 'sāmanta's heard the news. While the court was divided on the line of action, Vīrā championed her son's cause in a heroic speech and roused Karandhama. He defeated the wicked Viśāla's confederacy, and Viśāla submitted with offerings of honour, set the captive Avīkṣita free, and Karandhama rested for the night as Viśāla's guest. Then Viśāla came up with his daughter, but Avīkṣita declined to have her in marriage, nor would he henceforth have the company of any other woman, because of his defeat. Viśāla next asked his daughter to choose another husband. But Vaiśālinī persisted in her choice of Avīkṣita, whom she, in her argument, justified as really the victor, and asked her father to entreat Avīkṣita on her behalf; but Avīksita still declined. Thereupon Karandhama commanded his son, since the girl obviously loved him; Avīkṣita however still refused. Viśāla again asked his daughter to choose another husband, but she now decided to take to religious penance if Avīkṣita declined to have her. Karandhama now left Viśāla's city for his own,—(Evidently Karandhama's capital was not Vaiśālī itself but a city in the same region, though, later on, his grandson is said to have ruled at Vaiśālī itself),—along with Avīkṣita, after spending three more days there. Vaiśālinī went into an 'āśrama' for mortification and then self-immolation, but she was prevented from taking extreme steps by a 'prophecy' which promised her a son who would be a 'universal emperor' (the slayer of Tarujit, Aya and Śaṅku,—probably the same as Vatsa-prī's successor in Vaiśālī, by name Saṃkīla, counted like his predecessors as a ṛṣi of the Ṛg-Veda,—an upholder of society and state, and a great sacrificer). She was persuaded to renourish herself and await the advent of the son,—though she thought it could not be, for she would have none but Avīkṣita for her husband, and he had declined to have her. Meanwhile Avīkṣita's mother, the heroic Vīrā, induced him to engage in the 'Kimicchaka' penance, in which he would have to bestow whatever was asked of him. Then Karandhama, advised by her and also by his ministers, asked of him a grandson, which meant foregoing his self-imposed continence;—this very unwillingly Avīkṣita had to promise. But Avīkṣita would yet have nothing to do with his previous wives or other women who knew about his defeat,—so that he set out to find a new wife for the sake of his parents. Subsequently, in the course of a hunting expedition, Avīkṣita had occasion to rescue a maiden who, seized by the Dānava Dṛḍhakeśa, was crying aloud that a hero's wife—the wife of Karandhama's son, Avīkṣita—was being kidnapped by a villain. Avīkṣita felt surprised but came up, declaring that it could not be so while Karandhama was still the King. The girl repeated her claim and plea, while Avīkṣita engaged the abductor: after Dṛḍhakeśa was killed in combat and the maiden freed, he was

[1] There is an obvious error here; as in several other known Epic-Purāṇic instances, there is a confusion between Vaidiśa and Vaideha in the texts. Here, too, obviously, Vaideha is meant—or, better still, probably Vaiśālī itself is meant;—for if the King is Viśāla and his daughter Vaiśālinī, his city cannot be other than Vaiśālī. At most it can be Vaideha, Vaiśālī itself having been taken possession of by Karandhama at this time. Or, it may have been a new Vaiśālī after the old one fell to Karandhama.

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asked by his companions in the Hunt to marry her, so that he might satisfy his father's request for a grandson. But Avīkṣita was unwilling, for he had declined the love of Viśāla's daughter, who had consequently renounced the world as a life-long virgin for his sake, and it would therefore be cruel to think of marrying another. Then they explained that this maiden was clearly the same Viśāla's daughter; and she too, on being asked, personally explained her 'interim' history:

After the 'prophecy' had dissuaded her from mortifications she was preparing herself for Avīkṣita, by bathing in 'Gaṅgāhrada', whence an old Nāga chief carried her off to the Nāga city in 'Rasātala'. There the Nāga men and women implored her to remember them, and to use her influence with her future imperial son (Marutta) to save them when he would come into conflict with them. On her so promising, they bedecked her with the rare ornaments of 'Pātāla' and replaced her in the 'āśrama' retreat,—whence, however, Dṛḍha-keśa was just then kidnapping her. She entreated Avīkṣita, once again to give her his love, as her saviour hero, and Avīkṣita remembering his vow to his parents and her great sacrifices for him, now yielded. At this juncture the 'gandharva' Tunaya arrived, with other 'gandharva's and 'apsarā's, and claimed that 'Vaiśālinī was really his daughter, Bhāminī (Bhāvinī) by name,[1] who, by an Agastya ṛṣi's curse, was 'declassed' from the 'gandharvâpsaras' community and was subsequently brought up in King Viśāla's palace as a princess. The great 'gandharva' Tumburu became the minister at the marriage of Avīkṣita and Vaiśālinī-Bhāminī, and also ministered at their sons' birth and naming—'Marutta'—which events took place in the great city of the 'gandharva's. Subsequently, the pair, with their baby, arrived at Karandhama's palace and Avīkṣita completed his vow of 'Kimicchaka', whilst the city of Vaiśālī displayed its great opulence and love of music. Viśāla's daughter's son was, in due course, educated in the Vedas, the science of war, and in other sciences, under the Bhārgavas. Avīkṣita still refused to rule as king (for reasons proceeding from his own standard of heroism) and therefore, when Karandhama and Vīrā left for 'vānaprastha' in a Bhārgava āśrama,[2] Marutta had to be anointed the King of Vaiśālī.

Marutta is reckoned by the Epic and Purāṇic traditions as one of the sixteen Great Kings of Ancient India[3] and as a 'Cakravartin' or universal emperor.[4] The greatness of Marutta is generally emphasised, both in war and in righteous government, and it is remembered that he "regarded his subjects as his children" (like Aśoka a thousand years later). He was a great conqueror as well as a great sacrificer; enormously opulent and exploiting Himālayan gold-bearing regions, he was unstinted in his gifts; in his reign 'caityas' were raised all over the land (again, as in the days of Aśoka).[5] Maru-

[1] Or 'Bhāminī' may be taken as='Apsarā' or 'deva-dāsī' (as in medieval Magadha inscriptions), and not as a name. —King Vali of Aṅga, Vaṅga, etc., was also a near contemporary of Marutta and his Āṅgirasa priest family. There is a pilgrim-centre, a Bhṛgu temple, and a Bhṛgu fair at Bagerasam (according to Rennell), now wrongly called Bhadrason (same as Dadri Mela in Dadri-Kṣetra).

[2] This Bhṛgu āśrama may be the same as Bhṛgu-tuṅga, on a mountain on the east bank of the upper Gaṇḍakī in Nepāl. But, since Aurva is mentioned in the text here, it should rather be the Bhṛgu āśrama or Aurva āśrama in Ballia district, where Sagara—Ikṣvāku (a near contemporary of Marutta) was born, and up to which the Haihayas reached, as they pursued the Bhārgavas in the days just before Jamadagni and in the time of the Kārtavīryas. Ballia and Bāwan (Vāmana-tīrtha) are both connected with King Vali and Vāmana.

[3] Mahābhārata, Droṇa-Parva and Śānti-Parva.

[4] Mahābhārata, Aśva., -P., 4; Viṣ.-P., 1.

[5] 'Caitya's, 'stūpa's, etc., of the 'Buddhist' type (as it is wrongly called) are referred to as the prevailing type of memorial buildings in the entire Prācī—from Prayāga to the Eastern Sea—in the Yajur-Veda. Hence, there is no 'anomaly' in such particulars.

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tta's court was very much under Āṅgirasa priestly influence. Thus Karandhama's chaplain was an Āṅgirasa ṛṣi; so was the chaplain of Avīkṣita, probably Uśīra-vīja or Uśija by name: with this Uśīra-vīja as 'purohita', Marutta held a 'victory sacrifice' in the north at Lake Jāmbūnada, probably in remote Vāhlīka (Mahābhārata, Udyo.-P.). All the traditions narrate how this Uśīra-vīja or Uśija had three sons Ucathya (Utathya), Vṛhaspati and Saṃvartta: of these the first was the father of the famous ṛṣi Dīrghatamas, by the lady Mamatā (a noted Vedic scholar—'brahmavādinī'), the second, father of the famous Bharadvāja (whose son, Vidathin, was adopted later on by the emperor Bharata, as his successor), by the same lady; and the third son became the son-in-law of the emperor Marutta. It is further narrated how Vṛhaspati was the 'purohita' of a rival emperor (an 'Indra'), and therefore did not care to accept the chaplainship of Marutta when he offered it to him and, even after Marutta became superior to the previous emperor in power, he persisted in his refusal. Thereupon, Marutta went to Vārāṇasī and secured the services of Vṛhaspati's younger brother, Saṃvartta, who officiated at the 'Aindra'-Mahābhiṣeka ceremony (coronation as the 'Indra' of the time) of Marutta, the new 'Indra'. Thus obliged, Marutta gave his daughter in marriage to Saṃvartta. Saṃvartta was further instrumental in the exploitation of the Mūjavant region of the Himālayas for the sake of gold for Marutta's treasury.[1] Marutta's name occurs in several dynastic lists in about the same time (as evident from synchronisms), apart from the Turvaśa line to which he primarily belongs,—namely, the Vaiśālī, the Paurava, the Videha, and the Yādava (Vidarbha) king-lists. This position was apparently due to the overlordship of Marutta over these ruling families and temporary or permanent 'grafting', by adoption or conquest or royal marriage, to legitimatise the overlordship.

After Karandhama's death in the Bhṛgu āśrama, Marutta's grandmother sent a message to Marutta at Vaiśālī, complaining of atrocities committed by the Nāgas on the members of the Bhṛgu āśrama (killing brāhmaṇas and defiling sacred tanks), and communicating her instruction in governmental duties to her young grandson in great detail (quoted in the Purāṇic account). Marutta, greatly ashamed, visited her at the Bhṛgu āśrama and used "Saṃvarttaka" incendiary weapons (evidently as taught by his Āṅgirasa high-priest, Saṃvartta,) to set the Nāga strongholds ablaze. The Nāgas in distress sought the help of Marutta's mother, Bhāv(m)inī (Vaiśālinī), who had previously promised safety to the Nāgas, while assisted by them in regaining her husband, Avīkṣita. Bhāvinī requested Avīkṣita to turn away their son's fury from the Nāgas. Avīkṣita was doubtful, as Marutta was right in his action; but, since a promise had been made to the Nāgas, he undertook to go to Bhṛgu āśrama to persuade Marutta and, in case he declined, to fight with his son. Then Bhāvinī and Avīkṣita went to Bhṛgu āśrama, and Avīkṣita called on Marutta to spare the Nāgas, but Marutta insisted on his clear duty and refused. Avīkṣita proposed to fight it out with Marutta, who, though deprecating the idea, agreed (after a good deal of fine argument on both sides, quoted in the Purāṇic account). But, as at this juncture the Nāgas repented and offered to make amends and peace, and also sought both Marutta's and Avīkṣita's protection, the members of the aggrieved āśrama themselves intervened in the fight, and all ended well in affectionate greetings,—Vīrā and Bhāvinī, both Vaiśālian ladies, congratulating themselves as mothers of Avīkṣita and Marutta, their respective heroic and

[1] Cf. Mahābhārata, Śānti. 234; Anuś. 137. Also, Mahābhārata, Aśva. 4; Droṇa. 60; Śānti. 29; Aśva. 4-9; also, Vāyu. P. & Ait. Brā. 8, 4, 21. Mūjavata or Muñja-pṛṣṭha was probably to the north of Kuru-Pāñcāla, in Nepāl, and a place of pilgrimage visited by Vasuhoma, king of Aṅga, Rāma-Dāśarathi, and Māndhātā: Mahābhārata, Aśva. 2; Śānti. 122; Vana. 133& 85; Kūrma. P., 37; AV. i, 25.

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virtuous sons. Vīrā soon after passed away, praised as an illustrious wife and queen, and Bhāvinī "went to her own city", while Avīkṣita and Marutta "returned to the capital on one and the same chariot." It does not become clear whether the same city of Vaiśālī is meant, or two different ones in the same region. Perhaps a New Vaiśālī was built by Marutta as his capital,—Bhāvinī-Vaiśālinī continuing at Old Vaiśālī,—or, perhaps, Bhāvinī's father, Viśāla, built a new Vaiśālī (as the Epic-Purāṇic traditions aver) while Karandhama, Avīkṣita, and Marutta were in possession of the old capital of the region, whence Vatsa-prī had once ruled it.

Marutta, (who was partly an Aila, Turvaśa by descent and partly Mānva or Ikṣvāku on his mother's side), married seven wives, *all* of whom belonged to royal families of the Aila or Āryan group, none to the Mānva or Ikṣvāku group. They were:—Prabhāvatī, daughter of 'Vidarbha' or the King of Vidarbha; Sauvīrī, daughter of 'Suvīra' or the King of Sauvīra; Sukeśā 'Māgadhī', daughter of Ketuvīrya, (i.e., of Ketuvīrya of the Eastern Ānava dynasty of Aṅga, Vaṅga, etc., of which kingdom Magadha with Girivraja was then an integral part); 'Kekayī', (elder) daughter of the Madra or Kekaya king, Sindhu-vīrya; another (younger) daughter of the Kekaya king, named Sairandhrī; Vapuṣmatī, daughter of the (Ānava) king of Sindhu; and Suśobhanā, daughter of the Cedi King (who was a Yādava at *this* time, the Pauravas supplanting the Yādavas in the time of Vasu *later* on).—This stress on Aila connexions is significant, as showing how gradually a power that arose amongst the Ikṣvākus merged into a mainly 'Aila' dominion. In the next two generations, a 'Tṛtsava' or 'Paurava' element and then a 'Kauśika' one are introduced, thus strengthening the 'Aila' character of Karandhama's line and expanding empire. Subsequently, however, this dominion passes into the hands of Āṅgirasa brāhmaṇas,—as we shall see later on,—and, in the Vaiśālī region another local Ikṣvāku family is established, with the support of Paulastya and Āṅgirasa brāhmaṇas, which lasted till the time of Rāma-Dāśarathi, when its small territory was absorbed into the growing Kośalan empire. That was "at the *end* of the Tretā age"; whilst Karandhama flourished "at the *beginning* of the Tretā age", according to the Epic-Purāṇic tradition.—Marutta is said to have had eighteen sons. He seems to have lived to the age of eighty-five years, and in old age he retired to 'vāna-prastha', after anointing 'Nariṣyanta' or 'Nṛṣyanta' as his successor.

In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, which gives Vaiśālian history in great detail, comparatively little is said of Nariṣyanta, excepting (*a*) details of his rich sacrificial gifts, which made the brāhmaṇas so rich that in the latter part of his reign he had great difficulty in finding priests who would willingly officiate in his numerous sacrifices, and (*b*) details of his and his devoted wife's tragic end in an āśrama retreat, when their son, the great King 'Dama' ('Damana') was ruling. The reason seems to be that 'Nariṣyanta' was concerned more with expansion in the west, the south, and the south-east than with Vaiśālī itself and its Āṅgirasa priesthood (as we shall see presently).

We are told in the Purāṇas (Vā. 99, 3-4; Bḍ. III, 74, 3-4; Mat. 48, 2-3; Br. 13, 144-6; Hv. 32, 1832-4; Viṣ. IV, 16, 2;) that Marutta-Kārandhama of Turvaśa lineage adopted 'Duṣyanta', son of Tṛtsu (or Taṃsu) and the Paurava heir, as he had no sons to succeed,—that is *fit* to succeed,—for the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa says he had eighteen sons. This is very similar to the succession history after Duṣyanta's son, Bharata, who too had nine sons, but ultimately adopted a Bhāradvāja (Āṅgirasa) brāhmaṇa as his successor (the account is given in all the Purāṇas). Now this Duṣyanta was the son of a remarkable lady, called Ilinā, who was a 'brahma-vādinī' (hence most likely coming of a family closely related with brāhmaṇas), and who is also listed in some of the dynastic lists as a ruling

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'king' or sovereign. Since Marutta adopted Duṣyanta, it seems very probable that this Ilinā was a daughter of Marutta himself, and so closely connected with Āṅgirasa brāhmaṇas; for there is not much point in a total outsider being adopted into a royal family unless the adopted prince becomes or is matrimonially connected with branches of the adopting house: (as in the case of Karandhama-Turvaśa being adopted by Khanīnetra-Ikṣvāku, as detailed above: so closely did the Turvaśa graft become identified with Vaiśālī in this way, that the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (xiii, 5, 4, 6) calls his son, Marutta, an "āyogava" king,—referring to the tradition of the Farmer Kings of Vaiśālī). Unlike Karandhama and Avīkṣita, and like Marutta, Duṣyanta, as is well known, married, against much Court opposition apparently led by the Āṅgirasa priesthood of Vaiśālī, not into an Ikṣvāku family but into an Aila one, a Kauśika (Vaiśvāmitrī) princess.

It is fitting, therefore, that Duṣyanta is known in chronicles as Ailina-Duṣyanta and that the Bharatas are also called Tṛtsavas or Tṛtsava-Bharatas.—Marutta had another daughter noted throughout in tradition, as having been given in marriage to his Āṅgirasa priest, Saṃvartta. Probably the other remarkable 'brahma-vādinī' lady, named Mamatā, who was a wife to Saṃvartta's brother, Utathya, and also to another brother, Vṛhaspati, was another daughter of the same emperor Marutta. In that case it becomes easily explained why her son Bharadvāja's son (or grandson) Vitatha (Vidathin) was adopted as Bharata's successor in preference to his own sons, regarded unfit, for this adopted heir would be just a closely related cousin of Bharata. This would also illustrate the revival and persistence of the Āṅgirasa brāhmaṇic influence over Karandhama's empire, which was only temporarily eclipsed during (the engrafted Aila) Duṣyanta by Kaṇva-Kāśyapa (really Aila) and (Aila) Kauśika influence at court (through Śakuntalā).—It is to be noted that, while in the Paurava king-lists (with the Turvaśa lists) the names are Marutta, Duṣyanta, Bharata (or Varūtha, Bharūta) surnamed Dama, Damana, or Sarva-Damana, and Bhāradvāja Vitatha (or Vidathin), in the Vaiśālī king-lists the names are Marutta, Nṛṣyanta (Nariṣyanta), Dama (Damana), and 'Rāṣtra-vardhana' (which seems more a title than a name). Evidently we have here the same kings ruling over the combined territories of the Turvaśas, Pauravas, and Vaiśāleyas, (together with those of the Videhas and the Vidarbhas, perhaps temporarily and only in the time of Marutta himself, for the names Maru and Marutta are found in the king-lists of these two regions also in the same period). Nṛṣyanta or Nariṣyanta is thus the same as Duṣyanta, and Dama or Damana is the same as Bharata-'Damana', the son of Śakuntalā. Duṣyanta's father's name was Tṛtsu (often wrongly written in Purāṇic texts as Taṃsu—a copyist's error), and so it is fitting that the Bharatas, that is the Pauravas after Bharata, were also called Tṛtsava-Bharatāḥ in ancient passages.—In the Mahābhārata (I, 68, 2801) and Bhāgavata Purāṇa (IX, 23, 17-18), Duṣyanta is stated to have afterwards recovered the Paurava kingdom, revived the Paurava dynasty, and was hence called its 'vaṃśa-kāra.' Hence, his adoption must have taken place before he gained that position, that is while the Paurava kingdom of Matināra-Ṛceyu-Tṛtsu was in abeyance, owing to the Haihaya raids and military occupation of North India; and he could only have restored the Paurava prestige through the power of Marutta's empire, which passed on to him. This also explains how most of the Paurava branch families became, as the Purāṇas say, from now 'brahma-kṣatra' families, largely under the influence of the Āṅgirasas of the Prācī (inclusive of the Gotamas, Bhāradvājas, etc.). According to the Mahābhārata, Duṣyanta not only ruled widely in North India, but also in the Dakṣiṇāpatha, and the islands and coasts of the Indian Ocean; this latter expansion must have been helped by Dīrghatamas and Āṅgirasas, who, by all accounts, effec-

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tively controlled the extensive regions of Bali's kingdom extending from Magadha and Aṅga to Suhma, Vaṅga, and Kaliṅga. (Dīrghatamas consecrated Duṣyanta's son, Bharata, to the emperor's throne, just as his uncle, Saṃvartta, did the same function of 'Aindra' Mahābhiṣeka for Marutta). The Purāṇas also say that branch Paurava-cum-Turvaśa dynasties were started in Pāṇḍya, Cola, and Kerala of the South after Duṣyanta descended from him; this corroborates the statement of the Mahābhārata.

With this introduction, we can now take up the account of Nṛṣyanta and Dama (=Duṣyanta and Bharata-Dama), as given in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. This supplements what is known of these two great kings from other better known sources.

Nṛṣyanta's son, 'Dama', was a very famous king. He was so called as he was a 'tamer' of his foes and the wicked, very strong, yet self-restrained, with a 'muni's' temperament;—also because of his mother's great forbearance and self-restraint while he was with her (at her āśrama), and because he himself grew there to be self-restrained in character. He was born of Indrasenā, a 'princess' descended from Babhru-Kauśika (evidently the same who was an adviser to King Nābhāga of Vaiśālī, and who was a son of the famous Viśvāmitra-Kauśika the Great,—once king of Kānyakubja,—so that this 'princess' was about ninth in descent from her great ancestor, being his 'daughter' not literally, but in the sense of being directly descended from him). He had to abide for nine years with his mother at her birth-place 'before being born' (that is before being regarded as lawfully born unto, taken into, and accepted by his father's family). He was trained in the military sciences in the 'Dānava' āśrama of Vṛṣaparvan (in the Himālayan region, not far from Kailāsa,—known to Mahābhārata) and in the 'Daitya' āśrama of Dundubhi, called Tapovana (where his ancestor Yayāti retired of old: Viṣ. Pur.). He learned the Vedas and Aṅgas from Śaktri-Vāśiṣṭha's āśrama (probably at Vadarikā), and religious devotion from Rājarṣi Ārṣṭisena's[1] āśrama (near Mount Gandhamādana in the Himālayan region). Thus 'Dama' received a mainly 'Himālayan' training, associated with 'Dānava's and 'Daitya's, with whose chief ruling and priestly families the Ailas or Pauravas before Duṣyanta had many matrimonial and other relations.[2] Duṣyanta himself is sometimes referred to in tradition as a 'Dānava'; the appellations 'Dānava', 'Daitya', and 'Asura' are given in tradition to a number of Paurava, Ānava, and Yādava kings (all Ailas with Dānava blood). Probably such 'Daitya' and 'Dānava' training and tradition account for the ferocity which, according to the Mārkaṇḍeya narrative, characterised Damana (Bharata), and which is further borne out by general Purāṇic traditions, regarding his slaughter of his own sons (as we shall see later on).

It is clear from the above account, based on the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, that it is Bharata-Dauṣyanti, the son of Śakuntalā (daughter of a Kauśika in Viśvāmitra's line), who is spoken of, along with his parents. So it seems 'Śakuntalā' was his mother's nick-name or 'āśrama' name (given by her foster-father, as is well-known),—while her 'regal name' as empress of Duṣyanta (or Nṛṣyanta) was Indrasenā.

To proceed with the Mārkaṇḍeya account :—

The Daśārṇa King Cāru-karman's daughter, Sumanā, chose 'Dama' at a 'svayamvara.' The Mahābhārata also says that Bharata-Damana's wife was the Daśārṇa princess Sumanā: this confirms the conclusion stated above. Of the assembled princes at that 'svayamvara,' the Madra king's power-

[1] Not the Ārṣṭisena of later times known to Mahābhārata king-lists.

[2] Thus Puru himself, an ancestor of Duṣyanta, was daughter's son of Vṛṣa-parvan-Dānava, in whose 'āśrama' (endowed college) Duṣyanta was educated.

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ful son, Mahānāda, and the Vidarbha king Saṃkrandana's son, the intelligent warrior-prince Vapuṣmat of Kuṇḍina—the Vidarbha capital—in Dakṣiṇāpatha (a country of military fame), were previously enamoured of her. They conspired to attempt to release her from Dama, so that she might belong to him of the two, whom she *then* chose,—or, in case she chose none of them,—to him, by forcible capture, who kills Dama. They came up to Sumanā as she was standing beside Dama (waiting to be formally married), and siezed her person,—whereupon the assemblage divided into two hostile camps, some remaining neutral. Dama addressed an appeal to all of them on the propriety of this act, but all kept silent; then the bride's father, King Cāru-karman (__dharman), made *his* appeal for guidance as to the steps to be taken in law. Some kings gave the ruling that kṣatriya marriage is based on love, or choice of the bride, and so Dama is Sumanā's rightful husband, and the others are acting licentiously; other kings held that, apart from the 'gāndharva' and 'svayamvara' forms, there is another kṣatriya approved form,—namely the 'rākṣasa', based on force of arms,—which has been preferred by Mahānāda, Vapuṣmat, and their adherents. The counter-argument put forward was that *after* self-choice a girl becomes a wife, is no longer a virgin or maiden under her father, and hence the 'rākṣasa' form does not apply, and if force is used, it would be criminal. Thereupon Dama (thus supported) declared he is fighting for his married wife, and challenged all: after a strenuous fight, Mahānāda was killed by Dama; and Vapuṣmat also swooned, struck by him, and so Dama did not kill him. He thus recovered Sumanā and married her formally at the Daśārṇa court, where he remained for some time, and then returned to his capital (—Was the capital still at Vaiśālī, or had Duṣyanta removed it to Pratiṣṭhāna or Hastināpura ?)—with his hard-won wife and numerous rich presents and equipments, and reported himself (and her) to Nṛṣyanta and Indrasenā, and there were great festivities in the capital. When Sumanā's first child was born, Nṛṣyanta and Indrasenā retired together to an āśrama for 'vānaprastha', anointing Dama as emperor.

Some time afterwards, Saṃkrandana's evil-minded son, Vapuṣmat of Dakṣiṇāpatha, chanced in the course of a hunt (with an army and followers etc.), to come upon Nṛṣyanta and Indrasenā in their āśrama retreat and, before proceeding further, wanted to verify their identity. As Nṛṣyanta was then under a vow of silence, Indrasenā gave the questioner their names and addresses unsuspectingly, whereupon Vapuṣmat (violating all āśrama rules) pounced upon Nṛṣyanta in the very sight of the āśrama inmates, beheaded the unresisting ex-monarch, yelling that he had done so in revenge of defeat by Dama and the carrying away of Sumanā by him, while the 'muni's of the āśrama cursed him, and Indrasenā bewailed her lot. When Vapuṣmat left for his capital, Indrasenā despatched a śūdra 'tāpasa', Indradāsa by name, to her son Dama, —quoting previous historical instances of sons avenging their father, and addressing a very fine dissertation on royal duties to her son (quoted in the Purāṇic account).[1] She instanced King Vidūratha,[2] who avenged his father's death by punishing the Yavanas; the 'Asura' King Jambha[3] who avenged it on the Nāgas; and the Vāśiṣṭha Parāśara who avenged his father Śaktri on the Rākṣasas.[4] After this emissary left for the Court,

[1] Cf. an equally fine address of Śakuntalā at Duṣyanta's court, quoted in the Mahābhārata.

[2] Probably the father-in-law of Vatsa-Prī, an earlier Vaiśālian king; see above.

[3] May be the same as Kujṛmbha, contemporary of this Vidūratha, who ruled harshly over the Nāgas (who rejoiced at his overthrow); see above.

[4] No anachronism, since the much later Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana's father, Parāśara, was a different person,—Sagara by name and Parāśara by 'gotra.'

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Indrasenā embraced the body of Nṛṣyanta and became 'satī' in their āśrama. (A fitting sequel to the life-history of Śakuntalā).

On receipt of his mother's message, Dama's wrath was excited and he vowed a most terrible vengeance, namely that he would completely destroy Vapuṣmat and satisfy his father's spirit with the offering of Vapuṣmat's blood and flesh in the 'tarpaṇa' and 'brāhmaṇa-bhojana' to be performed at his father's funeral rites. He placed the whole matter before his 'purohita' and ministers and consulted them; they fully supported Dama in his grim resolve, and accompanied him on his Deccan expedition; they attacked and slew all the Wardens of the Marches of Vapuṣmat's realm, on their rapid march to the South. Ultimately, Vapuṣmat issued from his capital with a large army and tumultuous battles ensued. (A full description is given of this Southern Campaign). Finally Dama personally smote and felled Vapuṣmat, and standing on him was about to pierce his heart and drink his blood then and there, but refrained, remembering his vow. He now offered Vapuṣmat's heart's bood to his father and also offered 'piṇḍa' to him with his flesh, and fed brāhmaṇas, Paulastyas, and 'rākṣasas' as well, with that flesh.—A similar ferocity appears in the Bhārata dynasty with Bhīma-Pāṇḍava.

Dama's successor, Rājya-or Rāṣṭra-vardhana, was a philosopher-king and his rule was an ideal and pacific one. (This was to be expected, as Dama-Bharata was succeeded by his Āṅgirasa brāhmaṇa cousin, Vidathin-Bhāradvāja, whom he adopted). His queen was Māninī, daughter of Vidūratha[1], the king of Dakṣiṇāpatha, (evidently the successor of Vapuṣmat of the episode narrated above,—who had no other way but to make peace with Dama-Bharata by submission and a subsequent matrimonial alliance). A tender story is given about Rājya-vardhana's first grey hairs and Māninī's grief at that discovery. The pair resolved to renounce the world, but the 'subordinate rulers' of the empire and the 'citizens of its many cities' wished to prevent this by all means in their power. They repaired to the Guru-Viṣāla forest in the hills of Kāmarūpa (which region was within Bharata's empire), and began to propitiate the sun-god at his temple there, and obtained a boon of very long life and rule of the beloved Rājya-vardhana, but in the confusion forgot to ask for the same long life and happiness for the Queen and the subjects and court. This made Rājya-vardhana extremely worried, and he and Māninī both now went to Kāmarūpa and together worshipped in the same shrine of the sun-god, obtaining the boon of equal longevity and good and happy life for all concerned. The praise of this beloved and noble king was sung by Pramati-Bhārgava.[2]

After Vidathin-Rājya-vardhana, the Vaiśālī region drops connexion with the Turvaśa-Paurava grafted dynasty, and passes under control of the house of Tṛṇavindu, a local prince who rose to eminence. A royal marriage between his daughter's son, Viśravas, and Vara-varṇinī, daughter (or sister) of Bharadvāja (nephew of Saṃvartta and grandfather of Vidathin, adoptive successor of Bharata), served to increase the influence of the new dynasty. Tṛṇavindu's son was King 'Viśāla', and it is said he built (or rebuilt) Vaiśālī, or built a second or a new city of Vaiśālī. As already noted, his adopted daughter (or sister)[3], the 'Vaiśālinī' Bhāminī, was mother of Marutta, the immediate predecessor of Nṛṣyanta (Duṣyanta) and 'Dama'-Bharata. The line of Tṛṇavindu possessed *this*

[1] This is another Vidūratha, of Kuṇḍina in Vidarbha or Berar, not of the Nirvindhyā region in Mālava.

[2] A later Pramati than the one contemporary with Sudeva of Kāśī.

[3] Or perhaps his sister's daughter by the 'gandharva' or Court Musician Tunaya (see before). The term 'Bhāminī, is used for 'Deva-dāsī' of temples in medieval Sanskrit inscriptions of Bihar; so 'Bhāminī' here too can be taken as describing her 'apsaras' status, and not as her proper name

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Vaiśālī till the time of Rāma-Dāśarathi, when Pramati was its king.

A number of interesting facts come to light from epic traditions regarding Vaiśālī under this line. These may be summarised as follows:

Rājarṣi Tṛṇavindu, according to the Rāmāyaṇa, had a daughter named Ilavilā (Iḍaviḍā), who became the mother of Viśravas by a Paulastya ṛṣi. Viśravas married Vara-varṇinī, the daughter of the ṛṣi, Bharadvāja-Āṅgirasa; their son, Vaiśravaṇa-Kuvera, became known as the Lord of Riches, 'by virtue of his own efforts' (that is, in the direction of trade and commerce apparently). Under instructions of his father Viśravas, (apparently the same as 'Viśāla')[1] he then took possession of the city of Laṅkā, built in ancient times by the architect 'Viśvakarmā' for the Rākṣasas,-'who were the Keepers and Wardens of the High Seas in the most ancient ages'. In Viśravas's time, this Laṅkā had been abandoned by the Rākṣasas, who had fled further south and east (into the islands) after their defeat by 'Viṣṇu,' (probably by 'Paraśu'-Rāma, whose southern exploits and settlements,—that is of Yādavas and Bhṛgus,—are well known to Purāṇic tradition, and who came to be regarded as an 'avatāra' of Viṣṇu). "These Rākṣasas were an earlier section of the Rākṣasas, and not 'Paulastya' Rākṣasas of the time and group of Viśravas".

A brief history of these 'earlier Rākṣasas' is then given:

Heti and Praheti were their first noted kings. The succession was as follows: Heti→Vidyutkeśa+Sālaṅka-taṅkaṭā[2]→Sukeśa (a Śaiva devotee)+'gandharvī' Devavatī→Mālyavān, Sumālī, and Mālī: these three owned the city of Laṅkā on Trikūṭa hill on the southern shore of the Ocean.[3] They attacked 'Viṣṇu,'—apparently in the mainland of the Indian Peninsula,—but were pushed back to Laṅkā, while 'Mālī' was slain (that is, South India was conquered by 'Viṣṇu'). Later they had to abandon Laṅkā as well, and Mālyavān and Sumālī retired further down to 'Pātāla',—though these 'earlier Rākṣasas' were more powerful than their successors led by 'Rāvaṇa'. (It is clear that the three names Mālī, Sumālī, and Mālyavān stand for closely related ethnic groups, inhabiting South India,—Malabar, Malayali-land, Malai-hills,—'Somali'-land, 'Sumer', across the Arabian Sea in East Africa and Mesopotamia,—and 'Malayan' Peninsula and Archipelago; it is also clear that the Pulastyas of the Vaiśālī region—and other cognate 'brāhmaṇa' groups of North India—were cognate to them, and a fusion of the two led to a revival of these 'earlier Rākṣasas' in India',—though it also led to a long struggle between the two elements, ending with the overthrow of the 'revived or New Rākṣasas' in the time of Dāśarathi-Rāma).

After this 'Sumālī-Mālyavān' exodus, 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera settled in the abandoned Laṅkā and made it an appanage of Vaiśālī. 'Sumālī' visited the lost capital and saw 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera's 'puṣpaka-vimāna' (literally, 'puṣpaka'='a conveyance or *ship* for luxury travel', and 'vimāna'='boat or ship of *large* size',—according to Lexicons;—cf. 'nau-vimāna' in Ragh. XVI, 68), and his direct and constant touch (with the help of these ships) with Viśravas in Vaiśālī. 'Sumālī, planned to recover the lost position, (that is, of the Sumerians in Ceylon and South India); he rightly judged that Viśravas (probably a title, meaning 'of great fame and repute') of Vaiśālī was the source of all that power,

[1] Marutta was thus a nephew of 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera, and this partly accounts for Marutta's great wealth and fight with the Rākṣasas under a 'Rāvaṇa'.

[2] Literally, "the image of a courtesan, or a statue".

[3] Said to have been near Trincomalee in Ceylon, but to have been engulfed into the Sea subsequently by natural action. Cf. Dvārakā.

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glory, and riches, and so he deputed his youthful and charming daughter, Kaikasī or Nikaṣā[1] to go to Vaiśālī and woo and win the great Viśravas ('the grand old monarch' of Vaiśāli). This she did successfully, and bore him three sons,—'Rāvaṇa,' Kumbhakarṇa, and Vibhīṣaṇa,– and a daughter, Śūrpanakhā[2]. Kaikasī constantly urged her sons to equal 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera, who often came to Vaiśālī to see Viśravas,—and 'Rāvaṇa' vowed to satisfy his mother's ambition. He repaired to Gokarṇa (a celebrated, ancient Saiva pilgrimage centre on the Malabar Coast,—the modern town of Gendia in North Kanara, Karwar district,—where the temple of Mahādeva-Mahābaleśvara is said to have been established by 'Rāvaṇa',—33 miles south of Goā) and made strenuous efforts from there,—as a spring-board evidently, with the 'Sumer'-lands in the rear. Apprehending disastrous wars, 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera, by Viśravas's advice, gave up Lankā to his young step-brothers and retired to Vaiśālī and the North. But the ambition of 'Rāvaṇa' was only whetted by this peaceful surrender. He attacked and defeated Kuvera, and captured his 'puśpaka' fleet, which he used for his own purposes now,—until it was restored to 'Vaiśravaṇa' that is to Vaiśravaṇa's dynasty in Vaiśālī, by Rāma-Dāśarathi who conquered 'Rāvaṇa.' (Pramati of Vaiśālī, whom Rāma met in early youth, must have lived long enough to rejoice at this restoration of the lost fleet. After Pramati, Vaiśālī seems to have merged into the Kośalan or Videhan kingdom).

As is well-known, 'Rāvaṇa' is not a name but a title, and other South Indian or Rākṣasa princes bore this title,—which is the Tamil Iṛeivan or Iṛaivaṇ=god, lord, sovereign. So also the names Daśagrīva, Śūrpanakhā, and Kumbhakarṇa are queer Sanskritizations of original Dravidian names and appellations. This has led to mixing up of the historical details about several distinct South Indian 'rākṣasa' chieftains in the hands of North Indian chroniclers. Thus amongst the pre-Paulastya, that is pre-Vaiśālian Rākṣasas, some other Iṛaivaṇs are to be credited with the following exploits: (1) One such Iṛaivaṇ fought the great Ikṣvāku emperor, Māndhātṛ, of the Narmadā region (Dakṣiṇa-Kośala), but was badly defeated. (2) One of his successors, however, another Iṛaivaṇ, avenged it by defeating Anaraṇya (literally, 'non-fighting', peaceful—probably a title, not a name), the third king after Māndhātṛ in the same Narmadā region, and destroying his kingdom. (3) Another such Iṛaivaṇ, of the Jana-sthāna—West Deccan—region, about a century later, attacked Arjuna-Kārtavīrya, the Haihaya-Yādava emperor, also in the same Narmadā valley, but Arjuna defeated him, imprisoned him at his capital Māhiṣmatī, but released him on the intercession of the Paulastya brāhmaṇas, who were cognate to the Rākṣasas. (4) Yet another Iṛaivaṇ sought to interrupt Marutta's 'Aindra-Mahābhiṣeka' coronation sacrifice in Vaiśālī (apparently in vain). This same Iṛaivaṇ may have subdued the Nāga capital os Bhogavatī, for the Nāgas of Middle and Lower Gangetic regions were under the protection of Marutta,—as narrated before. (5) The fifth Iṛaivaṇ appears to be the 'Rāvaṇa' of 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera's time—a 'Paulastya'-Rākṣasa prince of Vaiśālian origin—who recovered the lost Laṅkā and appropriated the maritime fleet of Vaiśālī. It is just possible that the fifth and the fourth Iṛaivaṇs are one and the same. (6) The sixth Iṛaivaṇ was the 'Rāvaṇa' of Rāma's times, also a contemporary of the last 'Vaiśravaṇa' or 'Kauveraka', namely Pramati of Vaiśālī, and of Sīradhvaja of Mithilā's brother, Kuśadhvaja, (later of Saṃkāśya). This Iṛaivaṇ married Mandodarī, daughter of 'Asura-Maya', (probably a princess of 'Asur', the kingdom adjacent to the land of 'Sumer'),

[1] 'Nikaṣā' is a variant of 'Nikṣā'—literally, 'inviting kissing', or charming.

[2] Here, as we shall see presently, several 'Rāvaṇa's are confused and amalgamated, and the generation contemporary with Rāma and 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Pramati is brought up by about 8 steps, wrongly.

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and their son was Meghanāda-Indrajit. In Mithilā in the lower Himālayan regions, this 'Rāvaṇa' met Vedavatī, the accomplished daughter of Prince Kuśadhvaja, and ravished her. She vowed vengeance, and it is said she was 'reborn' as Sītā, in the same family,—which might either mean that Vedavatī's illegitimate, abandoned child was found and adopted by her generous uncle, or that Vedavatī's younger cousin-sister (by adoption), the foundling Sītā, was in *subsequent* times regarded as having *avenged* Vedavatī. Of these alternatives, the first alternative appears historically true, since there is still a large body of old tradition according to which Sītā was really a daughter of 'Rāvaṇa' (whence the special heinousness of his crime). It was probably this 'Rāvaṇa', who, after ravaging Mithilā through Vaiśālī, reached the upper Himālayas near Kailāsa but had to beat a disgraceful retreat from that region (being spared only because he professed to be a devout Śaiva).[1] It was also he who, after defeat by Vāli of Kiṣkindhā (Mysore, Carnatic, and South Kaliṅga), entered into an alliance with the 'Vānara' King, whose terms were: common enjoyment of raw materials and supplies, of resources of the towns, and of courtesans. [It is to be noted that 'Vānara' is also a Sanskritization of 'Vanavar-amban' and 'Vana-varamban', two Dravidian titles used in early 'historical' times by Kerala emperors, meaning 'Beloved of the gods' and 'Sea-farer' or 'Warden of the Seas' respectively. Clearly the 'Vānara's of Kiṣkindhā and the East Coast (described as 'sons of the gods') were a maritime nation, with whose naval resources and sea-faring activities Rāma discovered the whereabouts of the abducted Sītā and could rescue her from the rival maritime power of the Iṛaivaṇs]. This sixth 'Rāvaṇa' had also to surrender the Vaiśāli fleet to its rightful owners, and his empire was taken possession of by the 'last' Kośalan emperor of the Vedic-Epic Age, Rāma-Dāśarathi. It was passed on, curtailed, as a fief to his tributary, the seventh Iṛaivaṇ, Vibhīṣaṇa, who married Mandodarī, the widowed queen of the sixth Iṛaivaṇ (just as the 'Vanavar' Sugrīva did.)

A few other details about the Vaiśravaṇas or Ailavilas of Vaiśālī are available from some other Epic-Purāṇic sources:

The route to the cities of Vaiśālī and Mithilā from the āśrama of 'Viśvāmitra' ('Caritra-vana' at Buxar; Rāmāyaṇa Bālakāṇḍa, 26) is thus given in the Rāmāyaṇa:—From that āśrama, the party proceeded to the Śoṇa river (with many 'diārās' and sand banks), after a journey of about twelve hours, from morning to sunset, and came to the country of Magadha. From the Śoṇa banks the city of Girivraja, with its five peaks, could be discerned (so this Śoṇa must have followed the bed of the present Punpun or other channels in the Barabar Hills region). The source of the Sumāgadhī hill-stream (the Sarasvatī, Bāṇ-gāṅgā or Pañcanā) could also be seen like a garland between the peaks. (So they must have seen these from some part of the 'Upper' Punpun; a twelve hours' horse-post or chariot conveyance could bring the party to a distance of 100 to 120 miles from Buxar). The party did not cross the Śoṇa but went along its west bank northwards to where it joined the Gaṅgā; this journey was one of six hours, from morning till mid-day, that is within 50 or 60 miles. They crossed the Gaṅgā by big barges from the sandy south bank to the north bank and saw Vaiśālī city from the landing,—a fair, heavenly, royal capital of the 'Vaiśāleyāḥ rājānaḥ'. Going north from Vaiśālī, they came to Ahalyâśrama (modern Ahiāri, 24 miles south-west of Janakpur) and could see Mithilā City (Janakpur - Jaynagar?) from there.

[1] To this same 'Rāvaṇa' is to be ascribed the abduction and ravishment of Rambhā, consort of prince Nala-'Kuvera', [apparently son of the contemporary 'Vaiśravaṇa-Kuvera'], King of Vaiśālī, i.e., Pramati, contemp. of Daśaratha.

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The Purāṇas (in general) give certain variant and additional information regarding Tṛṇavindu's line:

Tṛṇavindu flourished at the third 'mouth' of the Tretā age,—that is, at the last of the three different 'commencements' of that epoch as computed by different chronologists. His daughter Ilavilā's son, 'Paulastya' Viśravas-Ailavila, had four wives, Deva-varṇinī of Vṛhaspati-Āṅgirasa's family, Puṣpotkaṭā and Rākā—daughters of Mālyavant, and Kaikasī—daughter of Mālin. The first's son was 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera, whose four sons and a daughter were Nala-'Kuvera' (Kauvera), 'Rāvaṇa', Kumbhakarṇa, Vibhīṣaṇa, and Śūrpanakhā; the second's sons were Khara and others; and the fourth Kaikasī's sons, Daśa-grīva and others. It is obvious that in these shortened genealogies, the several 'Rāvaṇa's are amalgamated. Except 'Vaiśravaṇa'-Kuvera's descendants, all of them were Rākṣasas. The Agastyas became affiliated to these Paulastyas, and the Vaiśvāmitras and Kauśikas too: all these three groups came to be known as 'Paulastya' Rākṣasas, while the Kauverakas were known as Yakṣas, though they ruled over the other two groups of Rākṣasas (also known as cruel 'brahma-rākṣasas')[1] as well, namely Agastyas and Kauśikas. These groups occupied a long belt of country, extending from Kailāsa through East sub-Himālayas, North Bihar, South-west Bihar and Rewa, to Deccan, and thence to South India and Ceylon;—the 'Kauveraka's comparatively associated more with the North, and their cousins more with the South. The Pulahas and Kratus were also counted as belonging to this general 'Paulastya' group. (Vide Pargiter: AIHT, for details.)

The Mahābhārata, in counting the sixteen great kings and in tracing the 'descent of the Sword of Justice', calls Dilīpa (the Second, 'Khaṭvāṅga', father or grandfather of Raghu) the son or descendant of Ilavilā ('Ailavila'): 'descendant' is better, for Dilāpa's grandfather, Vṛddha-śarman (a 'brāhmaṇic' name), is also called 'Ailavila' in the dynastic lists; he may have been a brother of Viśravas-Ailavila. That is to say, the line of Rāma was derived from Ilavilā (on the mother's side), equally with the contemporary lines of Pramati of Vaiśālī and the Iṛaivaṇs of Laṅkā, Rāma being eighth in descent from this famous princess. This explains the close connexion between the Vaiśravaṇas (Kauverakas and Rākṣasas) and Vaiśālikas (Ikṣvākus) and the Ikṣvākus of Kośala in this age, and the absorption of all their domains within Rāma's ultimately.

Pramati is given as tenth in succession from Ilavilā but it should probably be seventh or eighth, for in this interval are placed Hema-Candra (and Su-candra) and Dhūmrāśva, who are by synchronisms made contemporary of Avikṣita and of Nābhāga and Sudeva (of Kāśī) respectively (as detailed above). So also Dhūmrāśva's libertine son, Nara or Nala, is placed much higher up in the lists (evidently by mistake of copyists). It seems therefore that the synchronism of Pramati and Rāma, of Avīkṣita and Hemacandra, of Nābhāga and Dhūmrāśva and Nala, are all correct; and that Tṛṇavindu's daughter, Ilavilā, is to be counted as an ancestress of Rāma, as also of the Vaiśāleyas and Vaiśravaṇas (as well as, collaterally, of the famous trio,—Marutta-Duṣyanta-Bharata).

The landing place on the north bank of the Gaṅgā, whence Rāma had a glimpse of the towers of Vaiśālī, seems to have been the site of Hājīpur (and the ferry seems to have started from Dīghā—'Dīrghāraṇya Āśrama' or from proto-'Pāṭali',—mod. Fatvā). This halting place of Rāma is said to be marked by the present Rāma temple to the west of Hājīpur town; he is also said to have visited,

[1] Cf. the similar class of 'brahma-kṣatra's; 'Kṣatra' and 'Rakṣa' are equivalent designations; 'Takśa' and other cognate terms(fr.$\sqrt{}$ yah & yakṣ) have the same implication of "strength to protect, and thus to be honoured."

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for three nights, the Gajendra-mokṣa-tīrtha[1] in Viśāla-kṣetra, the site being now marked by the Sonepur Temple.

The Mahābhārata has some interesting sidelights to throw on Vaiśālī:

Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva's father's sister's son, Siśupāla, King of Cedi (Rewa, Chattisgarh, and C.P.), abducted the Vaiśālī princess Bhadrā, who was one of the wives of Vasudeva (Kṛṣṇa's father), while she was on her way from Vaiśālī to Dvārakā, (Mahābhārata: 2, 45, 1570). Kṛṣṇa's cousin, Arjuna, son of another sister of his father, was assisted in the Bhārata War by 'Vaiśāleyāḥ' Bhoginaḥ', said to be 'Nāga' chieftains of Nāga clans (Mahābhārata: 8, 87X', 4416); but 'bhoginaḥ' might also be equivalent of 'rājānaḥ.' (Probably the 'Nāga' princes were called 'Bhogins' or 'Bhojas' for wearing the Nāga emblem—the cobra-hood mark, 'bhoga'—on their crowns, like Egyptian sovereigns). Here too the 'bhoginaḥ' or 'rājānaḥ' of Vaiśālī are referred to (in the plural).[2]

The geography of the Mahābhārata knows of a Vaiśālī river, which was a branch or affluent of the Gaṇḍakī near Vaiśālī, (Mahābhārata: 13, 25, 1730; cf. also Mahābhārata: 1, 35, 1557 and 5, 103 Y, 3630). This river is said to be a sacred one, in 'Gaya' country [in Purāṇic geography, 'Gaya' and 'Utkala' stand for Bihar (N. and S.) and Chota-Nagpur, with Garjāt and Surgujā States], counted as a 'second Sarasvatī, one of the 'sapta-Sārasvata' group of sacred rivers, a 'tīrtha' for 'pitṛ'-worship (as on the Phalgu at Gayā), and as having a shrine of Karavīra, the Nāga, at Karavīra-pura on its banks. It is tempting to identify these place-names with Kolhuā village, adjacent to Saraiyā, on the east bank of Bayā river (wrong for 'Gaya'), adjacent to Bakhrā (Basārh-Vaiśālī),—all within the ruins of Vaiśālī,—Kolhuā containing the Aśokan pillar of Vaiśālī.

Possibly Singhiā,—the river port and factory of Dutch and British East India Company fame,—on the Gaṇḍakī, 12 miles north of Hajipur (Vaiśālī ruins being 18 miles from it), stands for 'Siṃhikā' or the port of the Siṃhas, that is of the Licchavis (a synonym in history); and it seems the term 'Siṃhikā', with its variant 'Hiṃsikā', came to be used of 'pirate ships' in ancient India[3], because of the sway that Licchavi or Siṃha or Vaiśālian (or Vaiśravaṇa) mercantile and armed fleet held over the Lower Ganges and the Bay of Bengal right up to Ceylon and other islands, in the Epic period.[4] It is to be noted that Pāṭali fort was founded in the sixth century B. C. by the Siśu-Nāgas, to check these depredations of Vaiśālian ships. One such 'Siṃhikā', evidently of the Vaiśālian fleet captured and utilized by the Iṛaivaṇ, is said, in the Rāmāyaṇa, to have intercepted 'Hanumant' on the high seas, while he was crossing over to Laṅkā (probably on board a 'Vānara', that is 'Vanavar' ship).

From the ethnological standpoint, it is interesting to note that Buddhistic literature knew of 'Vānara' people in Vaiśālī. Hieun-Tsang saw a statue of a 'Vānara' chief at the Aśokan Pillar in Vaiśālī beside the 'Rāma'-Kuṇḍa tank,—representing evidently the adherence of the 'Vānara' people to the Buddha. The statue may have been of 'Hanumant.' It is to be noted that 'Hanumant' of later legends is an amalgam of two elements: (1) Bhānu-mant, son and successor of Sīradhvaja, at Mithilā, brother of Sītā and brother-in-law of Rāma and therefore his prime assister in the rescue of Sītā, and

[1] Prob. the old name of Hajipur was 'Hasti-pura' (with ref. to the 'Hasti' legend): in medieval Tibetan texts the name is 'Hatsi-pura'.

[2] Probably the same title 'Bhoja' used by Yādavas had the same origin. It is well known that the Yādavas of the south-west ruled over the Nāgas and were, after Kṛṣṇa, overthrown by them.

[3] Cf. Kauṭilya's Arthaśātra.

[4] Cf. Elizabethan & Spanish 'bucaneers', or 'flying' Dutchmen (like 'puṣpaka vimāna's of Vaiśālī).

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(2) 'Aṇ-maṇṭi', a Dravidian deity, the name meaning the Male Monkey=the Ṛg-Vedic Vṛṣā-Kapi, an aspect of Indra, that is incorporated into the North Indian Indra worship even in early Ṛg-Vedic times. As such, Vṛṣā-Kapi=Āṇ-maṇṭi (Sanskritized into 'Hanumant') was a war-like divinity, the great helper of warriors in their efforts. The 'Vanavars' (Sanskritized into 'Vānara's) of south-east India, worshipping the great Āṇ-maṇṭi, secured Sītā's release, as also did her own brother, Bhānu-mant: a mixing up of the two was easy, especially because, from the evidence of the Rāmāyaṇa, the 'Vānara's and the Kośalas or Ikṣvākus were very much allied kindred people, and the 'Male Monkey' worship must have prevailed in north-east India as well, otherwise the Vṛṣā-Kapi cult would not have been referred to in the Ṛk-Saṃhitā. The Vaiśālians, as sea-farers, could also be classed as 'Vana-vars' or 'rulers of the waves.'

According to the Rāmāyaṇa, 'Ṛkṣa's were a class of 'Vānara's who were strong adherents of Rāma. These 'Ṛkṣas' are clearly the 'Ricchas' or 'Licchai' of the subsequent Buddhistic age. The Ṛkṣa chief, Jāmbavant,[1]—correctly 'Jambha-vant' or 'Jambha'—is clearly a title of the Kauveraka-Vaiśālian princes, for 'Kuvera'=Jambha, as is well known. Buddhistic historical tradition asserts that the Licchai (Ṛkṣas) were Ikṣvākus, and this is also borne out by Epic-Purāṇic tradition regarding Vānaras, Rākṣasas, and Vaiśālians (as seen above). It seems possible that Ṛkṣa or Rakṣa are really the same ethnic names, having the meaning of leonine power and majesty and protective ability. The Ṛkṣas (along with Golāṅgulas—cf. the Himālayan tribal name of 'Gorāṅg' in Nepāl) are said, in Epic-Purāṇic tradition, to have often protected the Kośalan or other Ikṣvāku families from the invasions of the Haihayas and others, and thus saved their kingdoms. They are also referred as holding sway over Magadha and Girivraja from time to time.[2]

There is a large body of 'Chero' tradition connected with old sites in the Vaiśālī region. The Cheras were a 'Dravidian' people, whose modern counterpart are the Keralas (also called Cheras) of Malabar, amongst whom kings were called 'Vanavara's (Vānaras). In the ninth century B.C., in the time of Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, the Magadhas were neighbours of the Vaṅgas and the Cheras; these Cheras would be the Vaiśālī Chera(o)s and the well known Chotanagpur Chera(o)s as well, rather than Malabaris or Malayalis. This confirms the traditional connexion of Vaiśālī with the 'Mālī's and their cognates, as detailed above. The Rāmāyaṇa says that the languages of the Vānaras, Rākṣasas, and Kośalans were very similar and mutually intelligible. It seems, therefore, that the original language of the Vaiśālī region was akin to the Chera or Malayāli language (of ancient times), before the adoption of Indo-Āryan dialects. The Cheras of Vaiśālī are said to have ruled, in the middle ages, over a 'Dosād'[3] population, and the Dosāds also occasionally rose to political power and founded ruling families in these regions,—as did also the 'barbers': as examples may be cited the local traditions *re* Jauri-dih or Bithauli 12 miles from Hajipur, Katra 18 miles from Muzaffarpur, or Parsauni in Sitamarhi sub-division, and Suhel-garh on the Bāgmatī, 18 miles from Muzaffarpur.

Even at the present day, the population of the Vaiśālī region is mainly 'Vaiśya', and the region can be said to have been a 'Viś' region, so that the name of the city and the king or dynasty—Viśālā

[1] In the later Mahābhārata period as well, Ṛkṣa chiefs were called 'Jāmba-vant', and their princesses called 'Jāmba-vatī.'

[2] Something like the Janissaries of the Turks, or the Gurkhā (Licchavi) guards of the Guptas (or even of modern Indian landlords).

[3] 'Dāsādi', 'Dāsādya', or 'Dāsātya', i.e., derived from or belonging to the 'Dāsa' or 'Dasyu' ethnic groups ?

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or Vaiśālī or Viśāla—is justified. Thus 'āhīrs' ('ābhīras') form one-eighth of the population and are closely followed by Koeris and Kurmīs;[1] the Bābhans, an agricultural community, come closest to the 'āhīrs' in numbers; the 'Dosāds,' over whom the 'Cheras' ruled, are third in order of population; the 'Rājputs' come next, and probably represent the *earlier* 'Chera (o)' ruling classes. 'Brāhmaṇas' proper, of the *classical and medieval* types, come after *all* of them.

Regarding the 'Bābhans' of the Vaiśālī region, the most ancient of the three legends, and historically the most probable, is the one referred to the times of the Bhārata War. At Jarāsandha's Rājasūya sacrifices, that fascist king is alleged to have created, by a royal fiat, a new class of 'brāhmaṇa' priesthood and a new privileged order, to take the place of the earlier 'brāhmaṇas' who dissented from him and left his Court and realm. The descendants of these new (Magadhan) brāhmaṇas were the 'Bābhanas' (a Māgadhī Prākṛta from of 'brāhmaṇa'). It is sometimes thought that the 'Bābhans' are referred to in Aśokan inscriptions; but it is better to see in Aśoka's 'bambhana'=brāhmaṇa a corroboration of the tradition that the new brāhmaṇas of Magadha represent 'Bābhans' accurately.

The ancient folk rituals of marriage of Tanks and Wells, and of Mango-trees with Banyan trees, as they are still performed in the Vaiśālī region, seem to be reminiscent of Vedic and pre-Vedic legends. In the former, the Asura Śuṣṇa is killed by a piercing weapon, as he drinks up all waters and tries to escape. In the latter, the marriage ceremony is about the same in details as in the legend of the foundation of Pāṭali-grāma in an early pre-Buddhistic Age (viz., the playful identification of the ruling pre-Āryan princess with a Mango-tree and her marriage with a tree as such).

To conclude the sketch of the political history of Vaiśālī: After Pramati, it formed part of Kośala for some time. But with the decline of Kośalan power (due to partition of Rāma's empire into eight parts among the children of the four brothers), it may have passed into the possession of the dynasty of Mithilā, where Rāma's brother-in-law Bhānumant ruled. In the times of the Bhārata War, as we have already seen, the Vaiśālī princes had separate political and matrimonial dynastic relations with the Yādavas and the Pāṇḍavas; but, after the Bhārata War, the continued eclipse of Ayodhyā and the revival of Mithilā (after Kṛtakṣaṇa, who was contemporary with that war), under the 'Janaka' Ugra-Sena and at least three other 'Janaka's after him (Janadeva, Dharmadhvaja, and Āyasthūṇa),—which renaissance lasted for about twelve generations after the Great War, that is for about 250 years, c. 950 to 700 B.C.,—leaves no doubt that the Vaiśālī region became part of this Videha kingdom.—It was in the time and mostly in the court of these Later 'Janaka's that the famous sages of the Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upaniśads flourished,—about sixty in number from the generation of Auddālaki-Śvetaketu (contemporary with Ugra-Sena 'Janaka') to that of Satyakāma-Jābāla (contemporary with Āyasthūṇa 'Janaka'). To this group belong Yājñavalkya-Vājasaneya, founder of the Vājasaneya Vedic School, and his pupil 'Āsuri's pupil, the Vāśiṣṭha-Pañcaśikha, (son of the lady Kapilā, and hence shortly called 'Kapila'), the founder of the Sāṅkhya system and a 'bhikṣu' of the Buddhist Order (of the "Former Buddhas"); this Pañcaśikha converted the 'Janaka's Janadeva and Dharmadhvaja, to the Sāṅkhya system of 'Mokṣa' (Nirvāṇa). Therefore, "proto-Buddhism," side by side with Vedāntism (Upaniṣadism), had already taken root in the Videha-Vaiśālī region

[1] Possibly these represent peoples originally cognate to the semi-aboriginal tribes of Chattisgarh (South Kośala) now called 'Kawar' & 'Kurmī' or 'Karmā'; they prob. are ref. to in the epic-purāṇic tradn. as 'Kauverakas' (of Vaiśālī) and 'Kirmīras' (a class of 'Rakṣa's) in the N.E.India.

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between the ninth and the seventh century B.C.[1]

The later 'Janaka's, in their spiritual enthusiasm, often relinquished dynastic monarchical power, and the last of them probably voluntarily 'disestablished' the monarchy of Mithilā. The whole region, from the Middle Himālayas to Gaṅgā, seems then to have broken up into a number of aristocratic republics, mostly belonging to some Ikṣvāku family or other, amongst whom of course were the Licchavis or Siṃhas of Vaiśālī[2], cognate to the Śākyas, Koliyas, Moriyas, and Mallas,—all Ikṣvākus. This change to non-monarchical government occurred between 750 and 650 B.C. In Gautama Buddha's time (born 623 B.C.) Vaiśālī was already a well-established republic, the federal capital of a Republican Confederacy, including the whole of North Bihar.[3]

Here we close our narrative of the hitherto overlooked historical traditions regarding the Vaiśālī region for the pre-Buddhistic ages. The traditions of the Buddhist and Jaina period, from about 700 B.C. onwards, are fairly well known.

[1] Cf. the details about "proto-Buddhist" memorial architecture in Vāj. Saṃ. and other Yaj. Ved. Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas.

[2] The same as Ṛkṣas or Rakṣas, 'r' becoming 'l' and 'kṣ' 'cch' in Prākṛt. It should be noted that Rakṣa has the same import as Kṣatra, and Ṛkṣa as Siṃha: the Mauryan 'Lion Capital' really is a Ṛkṣa or Licchavi or Siṃha emblem. Cf. Dilīpa, ancestor of Rāma, sees a vision of divinity in the form of a lion (Raghuvaṃśa). All 'Ikṣvākus', earlier or later, including Śākyas, Licchavis and Mauryas, used this emblem, as also the Horse.

[3] From the various traditions collated above, it is clear how the Buddhist legends grew about early success of Buddhism amongst the Nāgas, Yakṣas, and Vānaras,—all peoples of Vaiśālī and neighbouring regions.

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THE CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF VAIŚĀLĪ

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The history of the city of Vaiśālí, the capital of the Lichchhavis, goes back to hoary antiquity. According to Purāṇas, northern Bihar was the seat of a dynasty founded by Nābhāga, a son of Manu. Where exactly was the seat of this dynasty, is not known. The city of Vaiśālī was founded when this dynasty had ruled for about 20 generations. Triṇabindu, who was the 20th descendant of Nābhāga, had a son named Viśāla from an *apsaras* named Alambushā (Vishṇu P. 41·39). When this prince ascended the throne, he is stated to have founded the city of Vaiśālī. The *Vāyupurāṇa* goes on to observe that owing to the traditions inherited from king Triṇabindu, all the kings of Vaiśālī were destined to become long-lived, magnanimous, brave and religious (86-22).

It is interesting to note that a number of localities, cities and peoples, who are later known to have developed a republican form of government, are stated to have had a monarchical form of government in the Purāṇas. Such, for instance, is the case with the Madras, the Kurus, the Śibis and the Videhas. Here Puraṇas do not seem to be committing an anachronism; for Megasthenes also records the tradition to this effect when he states:—

'At last after many generations had come and gone, the sovereignty, it is stated was dissolved, and a democratic government was set up in the cities' (Arrian. Chap. X).

The change referred to by Megasthenes seems to have been a historical event. How it used to happen can also be inferred. In the Vedic age the states were small ones and had different types of constitution. In one type we are told that the administration was carried on in an Assembly of *rajans* (kings)[1]; the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* tells us that in such assemblies, he used to become a king whose kingship was assented to by others.[2] The Assembly of 'kings' was the assembly of aristocratic leaders, and among them he became king or the head of the state, who was elevated to that position by the consent of the other members. When the headship of a person thus elected tended to become hereditary, kingship was the result; when this development was not permitted, the republic was the consequence. Changes from one form of the government to the other must have been not infrequent.

According to the Paurāṇic traditions, the monarchical form of government continued to prevail at Vaiśālī for about 13 generations after the time of king Viśāla. Purāṇas continue the dynastic lists of other houses down to the beginning of the Bhārata war, but have nothing to say about the successors of Pramati, who was the last king of Vaiśālī, and who flourished about 30 generations before the Bhārata war. This silence must be due to the establishment of a republican form of

[1] यत्रोषधीः समग्मत राजानः समिताविव ।
(R. V., X. 9-7.)

[2] यस्मै वै राजानो राज्यमनुमन्यन्ते स राजा भवति न स यस्मै न ।
Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (IX, 3-2-5)

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government at the city. The date of the Bhārata war seems to be *c.* 1400 B.C.; the establishment of the Vaiśālī republic took place about 30 generations or 600 years before this event. We may approximately date this constitutional change in *c.* 2000 B.C.

A word of explanation is necessary about the term republic. The word now denotes a state where sovereignty is vested in the entire body of its citizens on the widest possible basis. It is however to be noted that such was not the case in the past. The term republic was used by the ancients to denote a state where the sovereign power was vested not in one single individual but in a group or college of persons, more or less numerous. Thus Sparta, Athens, Carthage, Rome, Venice, the United Netherlands and Poland have been described even by modern writers on constitutional history as republics, though sovereignty in these states was vested in a small body of aristocracy; some of them like Poland had a hereditary king at their head. When therefore we talk of Vaiśālī as a republic, we mean to indicate that the power was vested in a numerous class of persons; we do not necessarily mean that every adult member in the state had franchise. Such is not the case even in many of the modern republics like the United States of America or France.

In the republics of ancient India, there used to be a Central Government at the capital and a number of towns and villages in the moffusil. The administration of the latter was carried on by local councils, in which all castes and professions were represented. There was perfect democracy in the sphere of local government. But in the Central Government the Kshatriyas alone had the determining voice. Most of the republics were noted for their military prowess; the *Arthaśāstra* values an alliance with a republic for its military value; and the republics of the Punjab offered the most stubborn resistance to Alexander. The republics of the Uttarakurus and the Uttaramadras had the reputation of invincibility in the post-Vedic period. This fame was natural; for the Kshatriyas were the leaders and depositories of power in the republics.

The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya notes that the Lichchhavis, the Vrijjikas, the Mallas etc., were *rājaśabdopajīvinaḥ*. This expression has given rise to a lot of controversy. But its real meaning seems to be that the members of the ruling assemblies of these states enjoyed the title of the king. According to Śabara, the term *rāja* or king also denoted a Kshatriya and according to the *Amarakosha* II. 8.9.3 *rājanyaka* denoted a *gaṇa* or republic of the Kshatriyas only. The Lichchhavi state was a republic, where though the local government was a concern of all the castes, the central government was an affair of the Kshatriyas only.

There is ample evidence to show that such was the case with the Koliyas and the Śākyas, who were the neighbours of the Lichchhavis. The interesting account of the quarrel between the Śākyas and the Koliyas about the distribution of the waters of the Rohiṇī shows the same thing. The quarrel first arose between the labourers of these two states, and when they became excited, they started casting reflections on the high extraction of their ruling classes. This embittered the matters showing that the average citizen of these states had a high reverence for his rulers, who were sharply distinguished from the commoners. The Śākya and Koliya labourers report the incident to their *rājās*, who eventually decide to go on war. The commoners in the state had no voice in the final decision. They however carry it out.

We can now take up the famous Jātaka passage which describes the constitution of the Lichchhavis. It runs as follows:—

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तत्थ निच्चकाल रज्जं कारेत्वा वसंतानं येव राजूनं
सत्तसहस्सानि सत्तसतानि सत्त च राजानो होंति
तत्तका येव उपराजानो तत्तका सेनापतिनो तत्तका भंडागारिका।

Jātaka I, p. 504.

This passage has given rise to a lot of controversy, and considerable ingenuity has been exercised in interpreting it. Its literal translation seems to be as follows:—

Of the kings who were permanently residing and ruling there (i.e. in Vaiśālī) the number was seven thousand, seven hundred and seven. The number of *Uparājans* was the same, as also the number of *Senāpatis* and treasurers.

Dr. Bhandarkar thought that the passage refers to a federation of 7707, i.e., a very large number of kings, each of whom maintained separate autonomy, while allowing the Saṅgha to exercise supreme powers with reference to other matters affecting the state (*Carmichael Lectures*, p. 155.). Dr. Majumdar thought the number of kings was not to be taken literally; it shows simply that the supreme assembly was very large. Each of its members had a full suite of officers required for the administration of a state (*Corporate Life*, pp. 93-4 1st edn). Dr. Ghoshal thinks that the statement is true as far as the number of 'kings' is concerned, but not so far as the numbers of viceroys, generals and treasurers are concerned. (*IHQ*,XX, pp. 334 ff)

When however it is remembered how the term *Rājan* in some cases denoted only a Kshatriya and that the sovereignty was vested in the Kshatriya class only in most of the republics, the interpretation of the passage will become an easier problem.

The area between Gorakhpur and Darbhanga and the Himalayas and the Ganges was a land of republics in the days of the Buddha and there flourished the republics of the Bhaggas, the Bulis, the Koliyas, the Śākyas, the Lichchhavis and the Videhas in this small territory. The Lichchhavi state was the biggest in this area, but its area does not appear to have been more than about 5,000 square miles. When the Aryans came and occupied this territory, it seems to have been divided into about 7700 Kshatriya families, who became something like the Zamindar families of the state. They were all Kshatriyas and were known as *Rājans*. The heads of these families were staying in the capital and they had their own managers in the moffusil who were known as their treasurers. If the Kshatriya householders were known as *Rājans*, their sons were naturally called *Uparājans* or Yuvarājas. Each member of the Kshatriya aristocracy owed military service to the state and was probably the head of a small militia recruited from his Zamindari. When he was not able to lead this militia himself, he used to nominate a *senāpati* or general to act for him. Thus naturally the Lichchhavi state possessed 7707 'Kings', 7707 'Yuvarājas' or heir apparents, 7707 'Senāpatis' or generals and 7707 treasurers. The number may have been a real one once upon a time; in course of time it must have become a conventional one. The actual number of the *Rājās* must have been very large; if it was not 7707, it may have been at least its half. The Yaudheya republic was governed by a central assembly, whose membership was 5,000 according to the Greek historians (Maccrindle, *Ancient India*, p. 45). The Kshudrakas and the Mālavas sent 150 of their leaders to negotiate peace with Alexander. The Assemblies of the republics were thus very large. We should not forget in this connection that the Assembly of the republic of Athens consisted of more than 42,000 members, every one of whom had a right to attend its session and vote on the proposals. In actual

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practice hardly 2,000 or 3,000 members cared to attend. The same was the case most probably in India also. Out of the 7,000 or 5,000 members of the Assembly about 10 percent may have attended the meetings. The principle of representation was then unknown both in the east and the west, and so the right of every member to participate had to be conceded.

Though every one of these 7,000 and odd *Rajas* had theoretically the same powers and rights, in actual practice, the voice of the elders prevailed. The Buddha had predicted that the Lichchhavi state could not succumb as long as the members of their assembly met in concord, and carried on their business in concord, as long as they enacted nothing that was not already established, as long as they acted in accordance with the ancient institutions of Vaiśālī, as long as they honoured their elders and hearkened to their words (*Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, p. 80). This passage makes it clear that in the heyday of the Lichchhavi greatness, though the sovereignty was vested in a large number of persons, in actual practice the real power was exercised by select respectable members of the Assembly whose proposals were usually assented to by the rest. Matters were not usually pressed to a voting.

One of the important functions of the general assembly was to elect the executive of the state. We learn that the Mallas had an executive council of eight members; when they had formed a confederation with the Lichchhavis, the federal council consisted of 9 members from the Mallas and nine from the Lichchhavis. We may therefore take it that the executive of the Lichchhavis most probably consisted of about 8 to 10 persons. Each member must have been in charge of one of the departments of the state like the Military, the Finance; the Foreign Affairs, the Revenue etc.

The republics of the Kshudrakas, the Mālavas, and the Yaudheyas used to elect also their generals for each campaign. The same was the case with the republic of Rome for several decades. We may presume that the Lichchhavi General Assembly also must have done the same. The Śākya assembly is known to be discussing grave questions of foreign policy; when the ultimatum was received from the King of Kośāla, it was discussed in the General Assembly. The *Mahābhārata* however warns the republics that matters of foreign affairs, being rather delicate, should not be discussed in a general assembly. What practice was followed by the Lichchhavis we do not know.

Before the rising wave of the Magadhan imperialism, the small republican states fell one by one. The Lichchhavi state was however the last to succumb. Its fall was brought about by the dissensions sown among the Lichchhavi *Rājās* by the wily emperor of Magadha. We do not know anything further of the Lichchhavis for a long time. But history shows that the Lichchhavis again became a power after the decline of the Śuṅgas and the Kaṇvas. The prestige, power and military strength of the revived Lichchhavi state was very considerable; for the Guptas could attain the imperial position only by a matrimonial alliance with the Lichchhavis. Samudragupta never fails to describe himself as a *Lichchhavidauhitra*, i.e., born of a Lichchhavi princess; and on his father's coins, his Lichchhavi queen makes invariable appearance by her husband's side; and on their reverse the legend 'Lichchhavayaḥ,' 'the Lichchhavis' is always to be seen.

What was the constitution of the Lichchhavis at this time ? This is a difficult question to answer. The fact that on the reverse of the coins of Chandragupta I, not the name of a Lichchhavi king but of the Lichchhavis appears in the plural, would show that the official form of government was still a republic. But the power seems to have gradually passed into a hereditary family. At this time

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among the Mālava republic also, we notice the same phenomenon of the presidentship of the republic passing into a hereditary family; the members of this family were however not called *Rājās* there. Among the Sanakānikas of central India the form of government was republic, but the head of the state bore the title of Rājā and was probably a hereditary ruler. Since Kumāradevī seems to have been the Lichchhavi princess, who was the heir to the Lichchhavi throne and the state, it appears that the headship of the Lichchhavi state had by this time passed into a hereditary family. But since the Lichchhavi state is also indicated by the plural term Lichchhavayah on the coins of Chandragupta I, the republican form of government proabably still continued, requiring the hereditary president to act according to the wishes of the Lichchhavi Assembly.

The Lichchhavi state was amalgamated with the Gupta empire and Vaiśālī is known to have become the seat of a royal viceroy. What happened to the Lichchhavi state later on we do not know. On the dissolution of the Gupta empire the Lichchhavis do not seem to have risen again as an independent power, as they did after the dissolution of the Suṅga and Kaṇva kingdoms.

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THE LICHCHHAVIS OF VAIŚĀLĪ

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The old city of Vaiśálí has been identified with modern Basárh to the east of the Gandak in the Muzaffarpur District of Bihár. It has been called Vesálí in Páli works and Viśálá in some passages of the Rámáyaṇa and the Puráṇas. The city is said to have received its name from king Viśála who was a son of Ikshváku according to the Rámáyaṇa, but a descendant of Nábhága, the brother of Ikshváku, according to the Puráṇas. Several successors of Viśála are also mentioned in literature. If the above tradition is to be accepted, it may be assumed that the city of Vaiśálí was founded several centuries before the birth of Buddha Śákyamuni in the first half of the sixth century B. C.

In the days of Buddha and Mahávíra about the latter half of the sixth century B. C., we find Vaiśálí in the possession of a republican clan known as the Lichchhavis; but the cause of the transition from monarchy to republic is unknown. At this time, the Lichchhavis were a member of the Vriji (called Vajji in Páli) confederacy of eight clans. Of the eight confederate clans, the Vrijis, Lichchhavis, Videhas and Jnátrikas were the most important. Scholars have suggested that the remaining four clans were probably the Bhogas, Ugras, Ikshvákus and Kurus. The city of Vaiśálí was not only the capital of the Lichchhavi clan, but also the metropolis of the entire confederacy. According to tradition, the powerful Vaisalians invaded Magadha (South Bihár) in the days of Bimbisára, a contemporary of Buddha. But the tables were turned in the reign of Ajátaśatru, son and successor of Bimbisára, who destroyed the Vajjian confederacy and annexed North Bihár to the expanding empire of Magadha.

The next time we hear of the Lichchhavis we find them ruling in Nepál. Lichchhavi Kings are known to have ruled over parts or the whole of Nepál upto 879 A.D. when Rághavadeva conquered the country and founded the Nepálese era. But the date of the foundation of Lichchhavi power in Nepál cannot be determined with any amount of precision. The earlier inscriptions of the Nepâlese Lichchhavis are dated in the years ranging between 386 and 535 of an unspecified era. Indraji refers the years to the Vikrama era of 58 B.C., Fleet to the Gupta era of 320 A.D. and Levi to an unknown era starting from 110 A.D. We are however in favour of referring them to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. so that the dates in our opinion range between 464 and 613 A.D. But the Lichchhavis must have established themselves in Nepál long before the middle of the fifth century A.D., because the earliest inscription dated in the year 386 (=464 A.D.) not only refers to the Lichchhavi King Mánadeva, but also to his three predecessors Dharmadeva, Śankaradeva and Vrishadeva who must have ruled for about a century. It is well known to students of history that Chandragupta I (c. 320-35 A.D.), the

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first imperial ruler of the Gupta dynasty of Magadha, married a Lichchhavi princess named Kumáradeví and that the illustrious Samudragupta (c.335-76A.D.), the first Vikramáditya of Indian history, was an issue of this union. It is not impossible to suggest that Kumáradeví was the daughter of an early Lichchhavi King of Nepál. But certain Gupta coins bearing the figures and names of Chandragupta I and Queen Kumáradevī on the obverse and the word "Lichchhavayah" (i.e., the Lichchhavis) in the plural on the reverse probably suggest that the Lichchhavi relatives of the Guptas represented a republican clan holding sway over some parts of Bihár. The importance given to the Lichchhavis in the epigraphic and numismatic records of the Guptas may further suggest that the imperial position of Chandragupta I was largely due to his Lichchhavi marriage. In the seventh century A.D., the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang mentions Fei-she-li (Vaiśálí) which he distinguishes from Fo-li-shi or the Vriji country.

We have indicated above, in outlines, the importance of the Lichchhavis in the history of India. But the question is: who the Lichchhavis were. According to some scholars, the Lichchhavis were of Tibetan origin. This inference is based on the connection of their judicial system and the disposal of their dead with certain Tibetan customs. Others reject the theory on the ground that we know little about the state of civilisation in Tibet during the early days of Buddhism. Another group of scholars hold that the Lichchhavis were originally Persians who came from the Persian city of Nisibi. This theory has been criticised by several writers, and there is really no evidence in support of it. A distinguished writer points to the unanimity of Indian tradition in representing the Lichchhavis as Kshatriyas. His conclusion is that the Lichchhavis were indigenous Kshatriyas who were degraded to the position of Vrátyas when they championed the cause of non-Brahmanical creeds like Buddhism and Jainism. In my humble opinion, the learned scholar's arguments in favour of the suggestion do not preclude the possibility of the Lichchhavis having originally been a non-Aryan tribe, with Mongolian affinity, that was later admitted into the Hindu fold.

It is well known that the Indo-Greeks (Yavanas) and the Indo-Scythians (Sakas) were considered 'aniravasita' Śúdras as early as the age of Patanjali's Mahábháshya. According to the Manusamhitá (X,43-44) however the Paundrakas (people of North Bengal), Audras (people of the Orissa region; v. l. Chodas=Cholas), Dravidas (the Tamils), Kambojas, Yavanas (Greeks), Sakas, Páradas (Parthians), Pelhavas (the Pelhevis or Persians), Chínas, Kirátas, Daradas (of northern Kashmir) and the Khasas (modern Khakkas of Kashmir) were Kshatriyas who were gradually degraded to the position of the Vrishalas (irreligious men or outcasts or Śúdras) owing to the omission of sacred rites (or, prescribed duties) and to their neglect of Bráhmaṇas. Elsewhere in the same work (X,22), the Jallas, Mallas (neighbours of the Lichchhavis living about Kusinárá and Pává), Lichchhavis, Naṭas (professional actors), Karaṇas (professional scribes), Khasas and Dravidas are described as the descendants of the Vrátya Rájanyas, i.e., degraded Kshatriyas. It is very interesting to note that the Khasas and Dravidas are put in both the lists of Manu. It is, therefore, clear that the social position of the peoples indicated in the two passages is absolutely or almost the same. It is also to be noted that the Sakas and Yavanas are called 'elevated' Śúdras by Patanjali and 'degraded' Kshatriyas by Manu and that the position indicated by the two authorities is practically the same. Another important fact is that the first passage referred to above from Manu (X,43-44) mentions the peoples as 'Kshatriya-játayah' i.e., castes (social groups dependent on birth) belonging to the Kshatriya Varṇa (social grade). It seems quite clear from the above lists of degraded Kshatriyas as

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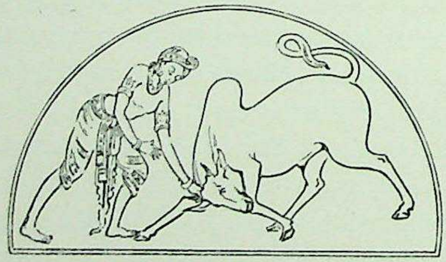
well as Manu's list of the degraded Bráhmaṇas (X,21) and Vaiśyas (X,23) and of the Varṇasankaras (castes arising from an admixture of more than one Varṇa) that the scheme is arbitrary. Its chief object was to make a suitable place in the 'Indian' society based on the conventional and theoretical division into four social grades for all foreign, tribal (Aryan or non-Aryan) and professional groups associated with the social life of ancient India. The position in the scheme was no doubt dependent on the rank demanded by the importance, culture and activities of the groups themselves. It is therefore natural that the groups whose activities resemble the conventional profession of the Kshatriya Varṇa, should be given a place near about the Kshatriyas in the scale. And such a tribe the Lichchhavis no doubt were.

It is well known that the Indian society was originally divided into two social grades based on 'complexion'—the whites and the blacks. The word 'complexion' was next applied to the four theoretical grades of the society, probably because the military and agriculturist classes lost partially the original Aryan complexion owing to admixture with the dark aboriginals. The real meaning of the word 'játi' is birth. Later it indicated a tribal group whose membership is necessarily dependent on birth. Numerous non-Aryan tribes became gradually Aryanised more or less, although they still retained their tribal customs regarding connubium and commensality. They were naturally indicated by the word 'játi' which thus became gradually popular in the sense of any social group crystallized into a caste.



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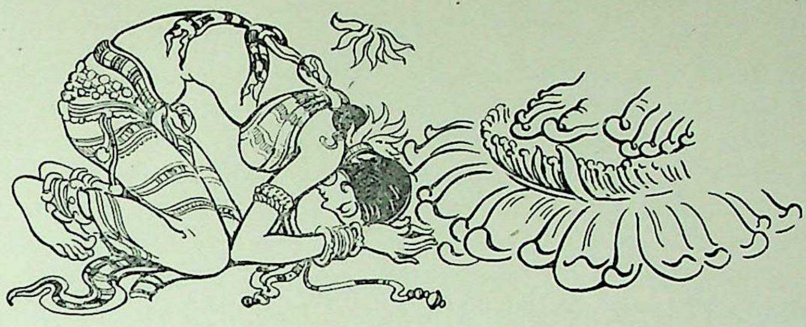

अम्बपाली

डा० वासुदेवशरण अग्रवाल, एम० ए०, एल-एल० बी०, पी-एच० डी०, डी० लिट्०

वैशाली की अम्बपाली गणिका बौद्ध साहित्य में विशेष आकर्षण रखती है। अपने अनुपम सौन्दर्य के कारण वह दिग्दिगन्त में विख्यात थी। उसके मांसपिण्डात्मक शरीर की परिचर्या प्राप्त करने के लिए वैशाली के लिच्छवि राजकुमार सदा लालायित रहते थे। जनपदकल्याणी अम्बपाली ने जीवन का जो मार्ग ग्रहण किया था, वह मांस की भूख को तृप्त करने के कारण चिरन्तन सत्य से दूर था। उस मार्ग में अपने अनुपम सौन्दर्य की विभूति को अर्पित करने पर भी अम्बपाली कदाचित् ही मृत्यु के सर्वाभिभावी विनाश से अपनी रक्षा कर पाती। जिस मार्ग से चल कर अनेक लिच्छवि राजकुमार काल के गाल में विलीन हो गये, वही अम्बपाली के लिए भी नियत था। निकृष्ट दुर्गन्धिपूर्ण मांस-लोलुपता के लिए स्वर्ग का सौरभपूर्ण वायु नितान्त दुर्लभ है। अन्धकार में दीपक बन कर प्रकाश फैलाने वाला जो चित्त-संकल्प है, वही सचमुच मूल्यवान् है। जिसके विचारतल को इस प्रकार का संकल्प एक बार छू देता है, वही मृत्यु से हट कर अमृत की ओर अग्रसर हो जाता है। विधाता ने जिस सौन्दर्य की प्रतिमा को इतनी सुघराई से गढ़ कर तैयार किया था, सौभाग्य से उसके उद्धार का पवित्र क्षण भी प्राप्त हो गया। बुद्ध रूपी पारस के स्पर्श से अम्बपाली की तामसी मूर्ति स्वर्ण की आभा से जगमगा उठी। बुद्ध के सम्पर्क से उसके जीवन का पाप भस्मीभूत हो गया और श्रद्धा के संचार से उसका हृदय शुद्ध बन गया—नितान्त कल्मषहीन, संयम और पवित्रता के भावों से युक्त।

राजगृह से कुशीनगर को जाते हुए बुद्ध वैशाली में ठहरे। उनके आने का समाचार जान कर हृदय की अगाध श्रद्धा से भरी हुई अम्बपाली भगवान् की अभ्यर्थना के लिए पहले पहुँची। अपनी स्वाभाविक सरलता से बुद्ध ने उसका सत्कार स्वीकार कर उसे प्रतिष्ठा दी। इस व्यवहार ने अम्बपाली के जीवन की गति को एकदम नये मार्ग की ओर मोड़ दिया। चाँदी और सोने के जगमगाते झूठे टुकड़ों के मोह को त्याग कर उसका मानस चैतन्य पहली बार किसी अनमोल तत्त्व को पाकर कृतकृत्य हुआ। अपने स्थान को पवित्र बनाने के लिए उसने बुद्ध को अपने यहाँ भिक्षा के लिए आमन्त्रित किया। बुद्ध ने उसके हृदय के भाव का मूल्य आँक कर अपनी स्वीकृति दी।

उसके बाद लिच्छविगण के अभिमानी प्रतिनिधि भी बुद्ध की अभ्यर्थना के लिए उपस्थित हुए। परन्तु बुद्ध अम्बपाली का आतिथ्य स्वीकार कर चुके थे। उसके हृदय की जैसी श्रद्धा वैशाली के उन क्षत्रियों में न थी। उन्होंने अनेक उपायों से—साम, दान और दण्ड भय से—अम्बपाली के महान् अतिथि को अपने लिए प्राप्त करना चाहा। किन्तु वैशालकों की वह प्रिय गणिका अपने दृढ़ निश्चय से तिल भर भी विचलित न हुई। अम्बपाली के मन की कालिमा नये विचारों के भावावेश से मिट चुकी थी और उसकी दृष्टि में सांसारिक वस्तुओं के मूल्य उलट-पलट गये थे।

दूसरे दिन उसने अत्यन्त भक्ति और आदर से भगवान् बुद्ध का अपने भव्य प्रासाद में स्वागत किया और रोम-रोम से अपने आपको उनके चरणों में समर्पित कर दिया। उसके व्यक्तित्व का कोई अंश भी अब उसके अपने लिए सुरक्षित न बच गया था। भौतिक जगत् में अपने आपको पूरी तरह खो कर उसने अपने आध्यात्मिक व्यक्तित्व की महिमा को पूरी मात्रा में पा लिया था। जब वह बुद्ध को भिक्षा करा चुकी, तब उसने अपना सुन्दर उद्यान—अम्बपालिवन—उनके चरणों में यज्ञ की पूर्णाहुति स्वरूप अर्पित कर दिया। उसका वह सर्वस्वदक्षिण यज्ञ आज भी अमर है और अम्बपाली का वह आदर्श बौद्धसाहित्य के चुने हुए जीवन को ऊँचा उठाने वाले दृष्टान्तों में है। किस प्रकार भारतीय प्रजाओं में ऊँच-नीच एवं धर्मिष्ठ-पापी के भेदभाव को भुला कर बुद्ध ने अपना लोकोपकारी तन्त्र सर्वत्र सबके लिए फैलाया, अम्बपाली का दृष्टान्त इसका ज्वलन्त उदाहरण है। वैशाली की उस जनपदकल्याणी नागरिका के लिए आज सब नतमस्तक हैं।

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भगवान् महावीर : वैशाली की दिव्य विभूति

श्रीबलदेव उपाध्याय, एम० ए०, साहित्याचार्य, प्रोफेसर संस्कृत-पाली विभाग, हिन्दू-विश्वविद्यालय, काशी

वैशाली युगान्तरकारिणी नगरी है। इसकी गणना भारत की ही प्रधान नगरियों में नहीं की जा सकती, प्रत्युत् संसार की कतिपय नगरियों में यह प्रमुख है--उन नगरियों में, जहाँ से धर्म की दिव्य ज्योति ने दम्भ तथा कपट के घने काले अन्धकार को दूर कर विश्व के प्राणियों के सामने मंगलमय प्रभात का उदय प्रस्तुत किया; जहाँ से परस्पर विवाद करने वाले, कणमात्र के लिए अपने बन्धुजनों के प्रिय प्राण हरण करनेवाले क्रूर मानवों के सामने पवित्र भ्रातृभाव की शिक्षा दी गई; जहाँ से 'अहिंसा परमो धर्मः' का मन्त्र संसार के कल्याण के लिए उच्चारित किया गया। पाश्चात्य इतिहास उन नगरों की गौरव-गाथा गाने में तनिक भी श्रान्त नहीं होता, जिनमें प्राणियों के रक्त की धारा पानी के समान बही और जिसे वह भाग्य फेरने वाले युद्धों का रंगस्थल बतलाता है। परन्तु भारत के इस पवित्र देश में वे नगर हमारे हृदय-पट पर अपना प्रभाव जमाये हुए हैं जिन्हें किसी धार्मिक नेता ने अपने जन्म से पवित्र बनाया तथा अपने उपदेशों का लीला नगर प्रस्तुत किया। वैशाली ऐसी नगरियों में अन्यतम है। इसे ही जैनधर्म के संशोधक तथा प्रचारक महावीर वर्धमान की जन्मभूमि होने का विशेष गौरव प्राप्त है। बौद्धधर्मानुयायियों के हृदय में कपिलवस्तु तथा रुम्मिनदेई के नाम सुनकर जो श्रद्धा और आदर का भाव जन्मता है, जैनमतावलम्बियों के हृदय में ठीक वही भाव वैशाली तथा कुण्डग्राम के नाम सुनने से उत्पन्न होता है।

वैशाली के इतिहास में बड़े-बड़े परिवर्तन हुए। उसने बड़ी राजनीतिक उथल-पुथल देखी। कभी वहाँ की राजसभा में मन्त्रियों की परिषद् जुटती थी; तो कभी वहाँ के संस्थागार में प्रजावर्ग के प्रतिनिधि राज्यकार्य के संचालन के लिए जुटते थे। कभी वंशानुगत राजा प्रजाओं पर शासन करता था, तो कभी बहुमत से चुना गया 'राजा' नामधारी अध्यक्ष अपने ही भाइयों पर उन्हीं की राय से उन्हीं के मंगल-साधन में सचिन्त रहता था। तात्पर्य यह है कि प्राचीन युग में वैशाली में राज्यतन्त्र की प्रधानता थी। बाल्मीकि रामायण में वर्णित है कि जब राम-लक्ष्मण के साथ विश्वामित्र ने यहाँ पदार्पण किया था, तब यहाँ के राजा सुमति ने उनका विशेष सत्कार किया था[1]। जैनसूत्रों तथा बौद्धपिटकों में वैशाली प्रजातन्त्र की क्रीड़ास्थली के रूप में अंकित की गई है। भगवान् बुद्ध ने अपने अनेक चातुर्मास्य यहीं बिताये थे। इसमें चार प्रधान चैत्य थे--पूर्व में उदेन, दक्षिण में गोतमक, पश्चिम में सप्ताम्रक, और उत्तर में बहुपुत्रक[2]। अम्बपाली नामक गणिका जो धार्मिक श्रद्धा तथा वैराग्य के कारण बौद्धधर्म में विशेष प्रसिद्ध है--ठीक उसी प्रकार, जिस प्रकार वैष्णवधर्म में पिंगला--यहीं रहती थी। उसीका आम्रवन बुद्ध के उपदेश देने का प्रधान स्थान था। बुद्ध के समय लिच्छवि लोगों को यहाँ प्रजातन्त्र के रूप में हम शासन करते पाते हैं। इससे बहुत पहले हम यहाँ महावीर बर्धमान को जन्मते, शिक्षा ग्रहण करते तथा प्रव्रज्या लेते पाते हैं। वर्धमान के समय में भी यहाँ गणतन्त्र राज्य ही था। वैशाली के इतिहास में कोई महान् परिवर्तन अवश्य हुआ होगा जिससे वह विशाला तथा मिथिला दोनों राज्यों की राजधानी बन गई तथा उसका शासन राज्यतन्त्र से गणतन्त्र हो गया। इस परिवर्तन के कारणों की छानबीन करना इतिहास-प्रेमियों का कर्तव्य है।

[1] तस्य पुत्रो महातेजाः सम्प्रत्येष पुरीमिमाम्
आवसत्यमरप्रख्यः सुमतिर्नाम दुर्जयः १६
सुमतिस्तु महातेजा विश्वामित्रमुपागतम्
श्रुत्वा नरवरश्रेष्ठः प्रत्यगच्छन्महायशाः ॥ १६
--बालकाण्ड ४७ सर्ग।

[2] द्रष्टव्य दीघनिकाय--महापरिनिब्बाण-सुत्त (नं० १३)

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वैशाली में अनेक विभूतियाँ उत्पन्न हुई। परन्तु उनमें सबसे सुन्दर विभूति है—भगवान् महावीर जिसकी प्रभा आज भी भारत को चमत्कृत कर रही है। लौकिक विभूतियाँ भूतलशायिनी बन गईं, परन्तु यह दिव्य विभूति आज भी अमर है और आनेवाली अनेक शताब्दियों में अपनी शोभा का इसी प्रकार विस्तार करती रहेगी। बौद्धधर्म से जैनधर्म बहुत पुराना है। इसका संस्थापन महाराज ऋषभदेव ने किया था, जैनियों की यही मान्यता है। तेईसवें तीर्थंकर पार्श्वनाथ वस्तुतः ऐतिहासिक पुरुष हैं। वे महावीर से लगभग दो सौ वर्ष पहले हुए थे। वे काशी के रहनेवाले थे। महावीर ने उनके धर्म में संशोधन कर उसे नवीन रूप प्रदान किया। भारत का प्रत्येक प्रान्त जैनधर्म की विभूतियों से मण्डित है। ऐतिहासिक लोग पार्श्वनाथ को जैनधर्म का संस्थापक मानते हैं और वर्धमान महावीर को संशोधक। महावीर गौतमबुद्ध के समसामयिक थे; परन्तु बुद्ध के निर्वाण से पहले ही उनका अवसान हो गया था। इस प्रकार वैदिक-धर्म से पृथक्धर्मों के संस्थापकों में महावीर वर्धमान ही प्रथम माने जा सकते हैं और इनकी जन्मभूमि होने से वैशाली की पर्याप्त प्रतिष्ठा है।

वैशाली का भौगोलिक वर्णन

वैशाली तथा उसके आसपास के प्रदेशों का प्रामाणिक वर्णन जैनसूत्रों में विशेष रूप से दिया हुआ है। इनकी विशद सूचना बौद्धग्रन्थों में भी उपलब्ध नहीं होती। इन प्रदेशों का संक्षिप्त वर्णन नीचे दिया जाता है :—

वैशाली के पश्चिम गण्डकी नदी बहती थी। यह नगरी बड़ी समृद्धिशालिनी थी। इसका भौगोलिक विस्तार भी न्यून न था। गण्डकी के पश्चिमी तट पर अनेक ग्राम थे जो वैशाली के 'शाखानगर' कहे जाते हैं। निम्नलिखित ग्रामों का परिचय मिलता है—

(१) **कुण्डग्राम**—इस नाम के दो ग्राम थे। एक का नाम 'ब्राह्मणकुण्डग्राम या कुण्डपुर' था जिसमें ब्राह्मणों की ही विशेष रूप से बस्ती थी। दूसरे का नाम 'क्षत्रियकुण्डग्राम' था जिसमें क्षत्रियों का ही प्रधानतया निवास था। इनमें दोनों क्रमशः एक दूसरे के पूर्व-पश्चिम में थे। थे दोनों पास ही पास। दोनों के बीच में एक बड़ा बगीचा था जो 'बहुसाल चैत्य' के नाम से विख्यात था। दोनों नगरों के दो-दो खण्ड थे। 'ब्राह्मणकुण्डपुर' का दक्षिण भाग 'ब्रह्मपुरी' कहलाता था, क्योंकि यहाँ ब्राह्मणों का ही निवास था। दक्षिण 'ब्राह्मणकुण्डपुर' के नायक ऋषभदत्त नामक ब्राह्मण थे, जिनकी भार्या का नाम 'देवानन्दा' था। ये दोनों पार्श्वनाथ के द्वारा स्थापित जैनधर्म के माननेवाले गृहस्थ थे। 'क्षत्रिय-कुण्डग्राम' के भी दो विभाग थे। इसमें करीब पाँच सौ घर 'ज्ञाति' नामक क्षत्रियों के थे, जो उत्तरी भाग में जाकर बसे हुए थे। उत्तर क्षत्रियकुण्डपुर के नायक का नाम सिद्धार्थ था। ये काश्यपगोत्रीय ज्ञातिक्षत्रिय थे तथा 'राजा' की उपाधि से मण्डित थे। वैशाली के तत्कालीन राजा का नाम था चेटक, जिनकी बहन त्रिशला का विवाह सिद्धार्थ से हुआ था। इन्हीं **त्रिशला** और सिद्धार्थ के कनिष्ठपुत्र 'वर्धमान' थे, जिनका जन्म इसी ग्राम में हुआ था।

(२) **कर्मारग्राम**—प्राकृत 'कम्मार' कर्मकार का अपभ्रंश है। अतः कर्मार का अर्थ है मजदूरों का गाँव अर्थात् लोहारों का गाँव। यह गाँव भी कुण्डग्राम के पास ही था। महावीर प्रव्रज्या लेकर पहली रात को यहीं ठहरे हुए थे।

(३) **कोल्लाक संनिवेश**—यह स्थान पूर्व निर्दिष्ट ग्राम के समीप ही था। कर्मारग्राम में विहार कर महावीर ने यहीं पारणा की थी। उपासकदशासूत्र के प्रथमाध्ययन में इस स्थान की स्थिति का स्पष्ट उल्लेख मिलता है। यह नगर वाणिज्यग्राम (जिसका वर्णन नीचे है) के तथा उस बगीचे के बीच में पड़ता था।

(४) **वाणिज्यग्राम**—यह जैनसूत्रों का 'वाणिज्यग्राम'—बनियों का गाँव है। गण्डकी नदी के दाहिने किनारे पर यह बड़ी भारी व्यापारी मण्डी थी। ऐसा जान पड़ता है यहाँ बड़े-बड़े धनाढ्य महाजनों की बस्ती थी। यहाँ के एक करोड़पति का नाम आनन्द गाथापति था जो महावीर के बड़े भक्त सेवक थे। आजकल की वैशाली (मुजफ्फरपुर जिले की बसाढ़पट्टी) के पास बनिया ग्राम है। बहुत सम्भव है कि यह गाँव 'वाणिज्यग्राम' का ही प्रतिनिधि हो।

बौद्धग्रन्थों के विशेषतः दीघनिकाय के अनुशीलन से पता चलता है कि बुद्ध के समय में वैशाली बड़ी समृद्धिशालिनी नगरी थी। उसमें ७ हजार ७ सौ ७७ महलों के होने का उल्लेख स्पष्टतः उसे विशाल तथा समृद्ध नगर बतला रहा है। नगर के भीतर अम्बपाली नामक बड़ी ही धनाढ्य और गुणवती गणिका रहती थी। ६ या ७ बड़े-बड़े चैत्यों के नाम मिलते हैं जहाँ भगवान् बुद्ध ने अपना चातुर्मास्य बिताया। इसके पास ही 'वेणुग्राम' का उल्लेख मिलता है जहाँ बुद्ध ने वर्षा में निवास किया था। इस वर्णन से स्पष्ट है कि वैशाली बड़ी नगरी थी जिसके उपनगर अनेक थे तथा उस समय खूब प्रसिद्ध थे।

वैशाली : महावीर की जन्मभूमि

वैशाली को हमने महावीर वर्धमान की जन्मभूमि बतलाया है, परन्तु आजकल सर्वसाधारण जैनियों की मान्यता है कि बिहार में क्यूल स्टेशन से पश्चिम आठ कोस पर स्थित लच्छु-आड़ गाँव ही महावीर की जन्मभूमि है, परन्तु सूत्रों की आलोचना से यह मान्यता निर्मूल

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ठहरती है। इस विषय में पं० कल्याणविजयजी गणी ने अपने प्रामाणिक ग्रन्थ 'श्रमण भगवान् महावीर'[१] में जो विचार प्रकट किये हैं, वे मेरी दृष्टि में नितान्त युक्तियुक्त हैं:—

(१) पहली बात ध्यान देने योग्य यह है कि सूत्रों में महावीर विदेह के निवासी माने गये हैं। कल्पसूत्र ने महावीर को 'विदेहे विदेहदिन्ने विदेहजच्चे विदेहसूमाले' (अर्थात् विदेह विदेहदत्त विदेहजात्य विदेहसुकुमार) लिखा है। वे 'वैशालिक' भी कहे गये हैं। अतः इन्हें विदेह की राजधानी वैशाली का निवासी मानना अनुचित नहीं है।

(२) 'क्षत्रियकुण्डग्राम' के राजपुत्र जमालि ने ५०० राजपुत्रों के साथ जैनधर्म ग्रहण किया था। इससे यह कोई बड़ा समृद्ध नगर प्रतीत होता है। महावीर का प्रायः नियम-सा था कि जहाँ कोई धनाढ्य भक्त हो वहाँ वर्षावास करना। अतः इस 'क्षत्रियकुण्डग्राम' की प्रसिद्धि तथा समृद्धि के अनुकूल महावीर का वर्षावास करना नितान्त स्वाभाविक है, परन्तु यहाँ वर्षावास का बिलकुल उल्लेख नहीं मिलता। इसका कारण क्या? उचित तो यह मालूम पड़ता है कि यह नगर वैशाली के पास था। अतः वैशाली में वर्षावास करते समय उन्होंने जो उपदेश दिया था उससे कुण्डग्राम के निवासियों ने लाभ उठाया। अतः यहाँ पृथक् रूप से वर्षावास करने का उल्लेख सूत्र-ग्रन्थों में नहीं मिलता।

(३) प्रव्रज्या के अनन्तर महावीर ने जिन स्थानों पर निवास किया, उन स्थानों की भौगोलिक स्थिति पर विचार करने से स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि वे सब स्थान वैशाली के आसपास थे। दीक्षा लेने के दूसरे दिन महावीर ने **कोल्लाक संनिवेश** में पारणा की थी। जैनसूत्रों के आधार पर कोल्लाक संनिवेश दो हैं और वे भिन्न-भिन्न स्थानों पर हैं—एक तो वाणिज्यग्राम के पास और दूसरा राजगृह के पास। अब यदि वर्तमान जन्मस्थान को ही ठीक माना जाय, तो वहाँ से कोल्लाक संनिवेश बहुत ही दूर पड़ता है जहाँ एक ही दिन में पहुँच कर निवास करने की घटना युक्तियुक्त सिद्ध नहीं हो सकती। राजगृहवाला स्थान चालीस मील पश्चिम की ओर पड़ेगा और दूसरा स्थान इससे भी अधिक दूर। अतः महावीर को वैशाली का निवासी मानना ठीक है; क्योंकि यहाँ से कोल्लाक संनिवेश बहुत ही समीप है।

(४) पं० कल्याणविजयजी ने जैनसूत्रों के आधार पर महावीर के चातुर्मास्य के बिताने के स्थानों का बड़ा ही सांगोपांग वर्णन किया है। महावीर ने प्रथम चातुर्मास्य अस्थिक ग्राम में बिताया और दूसरा राजगृह में। राजगृह जाते समय वे 'श्वेताम्बिका' नगरी से होकर गये और तदनन्तर गंगा को पार कर राजगृह में पहुँचे। बौद्धग्रन्थों से पता चलता है कि श्वेताम्बिका श्रावस्ती से कपिलवस्तु की तरफ जाते समय रास्ते में पड़ती थी। यह प्रदेश कोशल के पूर्वोत्तर में और विदेह के पश्चिम में पड़ता था और वहाँ से राजगृह की तरफ जाते समय बीच में गंगा पार करनी पड़ती थी, यह इन स्थानों की भौगोलिक स्थिति के निरीक्षण से प्रतीत होता है। आधुनिक क्षत्रियकुण्डपुर जहाँ बतलाया जाता है, वहाँ से ये दोनों बातें ठीक नहीं उतरतीं। वहाँ से श्वेताम्बिका नगरी न तो रास्ते में पड़ती है और न राजगृह जाते समय रास्ते में गंगा को पार करने का अवसर आवेगा।

इन सब प्रमाणों पर ध्यान देने से प्रतीत होता है कि वैशाली ही वर्धमान महावीर की जन्मभूमि थी, इसमें किसी प्रकार का सन्देह नहीं हो सकता। महावीर की मृत्यु 'पावापुर' में मानी जाती है। बौद्धग्रन्थों के अनुशीलन से जान पड़ता है कि यह स्थान जिला गोरखपुर के पडरौना के पास 'पप-उर' ही है। संगीति परियायसुत्त (दीघनिकाय ३३वाँ सुत्त) के अध्ययन से पता चलता है कि यहाँ मल्ल नामक गणतन्त्र लोगों की राजधानी थी जिसके नये संस्थागार (संठागार) में बुद्ध ने निवास किया। यह भी पता चलता है कि बुद्ध के आने से पहले ही 'निगंठ नातपुत्त' का देहावसान हो चुका था और उनके भक्तों तथा अनुयायियों में मतभेद भी होने लगा था। बौद्धग्रन्थों में महावीर 'निगंठ नातपुत्त' के नाम से विख्यात हैं। 'नातपुत्त' तो ज्ञातिपुत्र हैं। ज्ञाति नामक क्षत्रियवंश में उत्पन्न होने से यह नाम पड़ा। 'निगंठ' निर्ग्रन्थ है जो संसार के ग्रन्थियों से युक्त होने के कारण केवल ज्ञान-सम्पन्न वर्धमान की उस समय की उपाधि प्रतीत होता है।

जैनधर्म की विपुल उन्नति के कारण ये ही वर्धमान महावीर हैं, जिनका जन्म क्षत्रियकुण्डग्राम में ५९९ ई० पू० तथा तिरोधान ५२७ ई० पू० पावापुर में हुआ। इनकी जीवन-घटनाएँ नितान्त प्रसिद्ध हैं। पार्श्वनाथ के द्वारा जिस जैनधर्म की व्यवस्था पहले की गई थी उसमें इन्होंने संशोधन कर उसे समयानुकूल बनाया। पार्श्वनाथ ने चार महाव्रतों—अहिंसा, सत्य, अस्तेय तथा अपरिग्रह—के विधान पर जोर दिया है, पर महावीर ने 'ब्रह्मचर्य' को भी उतना ही आवश्यक तथा उपादेय बतला कर उसकी भी गणना महाव्रतों में की है। पार्श्वनाथ वस्त्रधारण करने के पक्षपाती थे, पर महावीर ने नितान्त वैराग्य की साधना के लिए यतियों के वास्ते वस्त्रपरिधान का बहिष्कार कर नग्नत्व को ही आदर्श आचार बतलाया है। आजकल के श्वेताम्बर तथा दिगम्बर सम्प्रदायों का विभेद इस प्रकार बहुत प्राचीन काल से चला आता है।

महावीर ने व्यक्ति के लिए जो सन्देश प्रस्तुत किया है वह सदा मनुष्यों के हृदय में आशा तथा उत्साह का संचार करता रहेगा। प्राणी अपना प्रभु स्वयं है। उसे अपने कर्मों के अतिरिक्त अन्य किसी भी व्यक्ति पर आश्रय लेने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। जीव स्वावलम्बी है। जीव स्वतन्त्र है। वह अनन्त चतुष्टय से सम्पन्न रहता है। उसमें अनन्त सामर्थ्य भरी हुई है। वह इस सामर्थ्य को नहीं

[१] 'श्रमण भगवान् महावीर'—शास्त्रसंग्रह-समिति, जालोर, के द्वारा प्रकाशित, सं० १९९८, भूमिका (मारवाड़) पृष्ठ २५-२८।

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जानता, इसीलिए वह संसार में नाना क्लेशों को भोग रहा है; परन्तु अपने सच्चे स्वरूप का ज्ञान होते ही वह क्लेशमय बन्धनों से मुक्ति पा करके वली होकर विचरने लगता है। जगत् के कोने-कोने में जीवों की सत्ता मानना, उन्हें किसी प्रकार भी हिंसा न पहुँचाना, मानव की अनन्त सामर्थ्य की पहचान करना—आदि सुन्दर शिक्षाएँ हमें वैशाली के इस महापुरुष ने दी हैं। इस दिव्य विभूति की यह वाणी सदा स्मरण रखने योग्य है कि जब तक व्याधियाँ नहीं बढ़तीं, जब तक इन्द्रियाँ अशक्त नहीं होतीं, तब तक धर्म का आचरण कर लेना चाहिए, बाद में कुछ होने का नहीं—

जरा जाव न पीडेइ, वाही जाव न वड्ढइ।
जाविंदिया न हायन्ति, ताव धम्मं समायरे॥

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THE GLORIES OF BIHAR

Mr. J. W. Houlton, i.c.s.

In Bihar we have especial opportunities for the study of history and archæology at first hand, for Magadha is prominent in the ancient history of India, and particularly in that period which to my mind is the most fascinating of all, the Mauryan epoch. From the description of those who visited the capital of Asoka's empire, from other writings, and from the excavations financed by Sir Ratan Tata, we know more about that period than about the centuries which followed. We can conjure up in imagination the glories of Pataliputra, with its royal palace and pillared halls, wide streets, and shops and restaurants, its lofty wooden ramparts, and its jetties on the Ganges and the Sone. For we may assume that when Pataliputra was selected as the successor to Rajgir, it was especially favoured by its location at the point where at the time the Sone flowed into the Ganges. It was a period when the arts, especially architecture, sculpture and terra-cotta work, reached great heights. The Didarganj statue and a few other remains are enough to show how high was the artistic attainment of that period. We can only hope that future excavations in our province will reveal more such masterpieces and will teach us more of the manners and customs of the time. To recall the wealth of Bihar in historical associations, we have only to mention a few of the famous places in our province: Rajgir, Nalanda University, Bodha Gaya, a hundred other sites which are associated with Gautama Buddha; places which recall the founder of the Jain religion; still older cities, like Champanagar near Bhagalpur, and other sites famed in Hindu mythology.

In Nepal I wandered about the ancient city of Patan, which was perhaps visited by Gautama Buddha himself, and saw the *stūpas* erected by Asoka at the four corners of that city and in the centre. I saw the village where Asoka's daughter lived, and I thought of the far-flung Mauryan Empire which stretched from the northern mountains of Nepal down to Southern India, and within whose confines the traveller could move unmolested along tree-lined roads, with rest houses every few miles, and when the whole country was at peace. That golden age did not last long. But some of the cities were still prosperous, and the great buildings were still standing, when Fa Hien travelled through the country 600 years after Asoka's death. In Pataliputra he saw the lofty halls with their elaborate carving and inlaid sculpture-work, which made such a profound impression on the pious traveller. He could not believe that these marvels had been erected by human hands. At Vaisali he saw the double-galleried *Vihāra* where Buddha dwelt, and the *Vihāra* which the woman Ambapali built in his honour.

Other writers for this volume will perhaps tell us of the glories of the city of Vaisali and the fame of the Lichchhavis. Such accounts will be read with great interest by many readers. I congratulate all those who are concerned in the publication of this volume dealing with that chapter of the storied past in which Vaisali and its people flourished.

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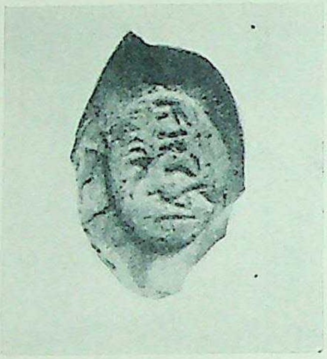
Some Vaisali Seals

Seal, oval 2¼″×2″. Central figure of Gaja Laksmi standing on a low pedestal; to her proper left, conch; to her right uncertain object. Legend Vēśālīnāmakuṇḍē-kumārā (2) mātyādhikaraṇa (sya) 'of the Crown-Prince's Minister at the Kuṇḍa called Vēśāli' (?). 6′ 6″ deep.



The obverse only with seal impression 7/8″ × 5/8″ oval device Sankha, legend Sarvva-dāsaya.

The field is divided into two by a ribbon like band running horizontally a little below the true centre. Above this are five objects, some of which are difficult to define. From left to right they appear as (1) a tall vase with radiating rays (2) something that looks like a tall tree, (3) the central figure which has the outline of a tree with spreading base, (4) a battle axe to left surmounted by a trident, (5) a kalasa with rays. In the lower field below the dividing band. Legend: Aramikīśvarasya.

Oval area 1·1/8″ × 5/8″. Device bull standing on base facing, with a small sphere between the horns. Legend not clear.

The clay seating shows only one impression with a square area measuring 1·3/8″ to a side. It contains twelve Aksharas and three very archaic symbols. The legend may be read as 'Veśālī-anusaṁyānaka-takāre. Dr. Spooner interpreted it as (seal of) the Vaiśālī Police at Takara (outpost) The date of the sealing may be assigned at first to the third century B.C.

From 7′ 3″ deep. Oval 1¼″×5/8″. Device tall, draped figure, nimbate standing on pedestal, facing. Legend, Bindinikah.

[*Courtesy Curator Patna Museum*

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SOME ASPECTS OF THE VAIŚĀLĪ ANTIQUITIES AT THE PATNA MUSEUM

MR. S. A. SHERE, M. A. (LOND.), CURATOR, PATNA MUSEUM.

It is interesting to find that Bimbisāra, the fifth king of the Siśunāga dynasty (who greatly extended the kingdom of Magadha), strengthened his position by taking a consort from the influential Lichchhavi clan of Vaiśālī (Basārh, Muzaffarpur). Chandragupta I of the Gupta dynasty also married a Lichchhavi lady. His queen who is mentioned as Mahadevi Kumāradevī, daughter of a Lichchhavi, has the first place in the genealogical lists. Gold coins of this king depict the actual ceremony of marriage, wherein the wedding ring is being offered. His son Samudragupta by the Lichchhavī lady in his Allahabad inscription introduces himself as "Lichchhavidauhitra", the son of the daughter of the Lichchhavi and he is always described as such by his successors in their inscriptions. The importance of status of the Lichchhavi lady may be seen from her title Mahadevī which looks like corresponding to Maharajadhiraja. The wives of Maharajas had the title Devī, while queens of paramount sovereigns i.e, Maharajadhirajas were known to have the title Mahadevi. The marriage of Chandragupta I with the Lichchhavi lady is further known by many of the coins of his son which were issued in the joint names of Chandragupta, Kumāradevī and the Lichchhavis probably with a view to place on record the marriage of Chandragupta and Kumāradevī and alliance with the powerful Lichchhavis. Such specimens of coins have on their obverse, "Chandragupta standing to left wearing close-fitting coat, trousers and head-dress, ear-rings and armlets, holding in left hand a crescent-topped standard bound with fillet, and with right hand offering an object, which on some coins is clearly a ring to Kumāradevī who stands on left to right wearing loose robe, ear-rings, necklace and armlets, and light fitting head-dress both nimbate," and on the reverse we have "goddess Lakshmī, nimbate, wearing long loose robe, seated facing on lion couchant to right or left, holding fillet in outstretched right hand and cornucopia in left arm; her feet rest on lotus; behind her on left are traces of the back of a throne on most specimens. The commemoration of the event appears to have had great significance and it is more than probable that Chandragupta I must have derived much benefit from it. It may be a matter of conjecture if the Gupta Emperor had political considerations in issuing a gold coinage in names of himself and Lichchhavis jointly bearing the image of his Lichchhavi consort.

Excavations were carried out at the site of the Lichchhavi capital Vaiśālī (Basārh) by Dr. Bloch in the year 1903 and the work was continued by Dr. Spooner in 1912 who like Dr. Bloch

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brought to light a large number of terracotta figurines, pieces of pottery and inscribed seals, among which one clay seal is ascribed to the Mauryan Period.

The number of vessels and potsherds unearthed at Vaiśālī is very large. They are mostly of the same type as recovered from Pāṭaliputra and modern Patna. Overlaps of pottery types from one stratum to another enable us to suggest a continuous occupation of the place of excavation for many centuries.

This theory holds good in the case of Vaiśālī as well where overlapping of pottery types is a common feature. There each stratum produced varieties of potsherds and vessels besides other minor antiquities. The vessels found at Vaiśālī are mostly red wares with red slip. Fragments having leaf design showing admixture of mica flakes and decorated with "rain drop" pattern are interesting specimens of this collection. The use of mica in earthen wares to impart lustrous surface may be common in those days as articles found in Pāṭaliputra and Patna also show the same characteristic. Some of the fragments have been found to be ornamented and decorated in high relief. There are specimens which are decorated with incised lines and geometrical design. There are also some yellow, green, brown, grey and black polished potsherds such as the beautiful fragment of glazed dish the upper surface of which shows pattern of radiating rays with border. Its colour is yellow ground with green and brown lines having plain light yellow colour for the outer surface. There are fragments which have blue, black gale. Some of the grave wares have black slip and are highly polished. There are dishes which have a painted base and rim. Some of the types of pottery found in different strata may be briefly mentioned as follows:—

1. Among the wares jar is very common. It has a light body with thin walls and no well designed neck.
2. Bottle necked jar in small sizes.
3. The commonest particular type of bowl is of small dimension with a flat base and inturned rim.
4. Cooking pans with small lug-ears on their rims.
5. Lamp with lip and high central projection.
6. Perforated lid with figure of peacock.
7. Dish having round bottom and broad flat edge and with circular projection in centre.
8. The commonest type of cup has a flat base, gradually increasing upwards in various dimensions to an inturned rim.
9. Sorahi (vessel for water).

It is interesting to record that Dr. Bloch found over 700 clay sealings and something like 1100 seal impressions of approximately 120 varieties which were mostly of unbaked clay and went back to the Imperial Gupta Kings (4th and 5th centuries A.D.). The scripts on the seals are of the Gupta type, but the emblems on them have no Buddhist symbols. The most numerous of the seals refer to officials, guilds, corporations, temples, and private individuals. The seals exhibited at the Patna Museum will show from the grooves on their back that they were perhaps meant to be attached to letters or documents.

A few of the interesting seals may be described thus:—

1. The device is a fantail peacock, facing which is the emblem characteristic of the Mauryan dy-

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nasty and of the eastern mintage of Gupta coinage. The legend reads *Vyāghravalasya*, i.e., (the seal) of Vyāghravala, who is shown to have been a banker on the authority of a seal from this collection.

2. The device is a small lion, seated on a flat pedestal, facing.

3. The device is a small conventional *Saṅkha*, high in the field.

4. The device is very small modelled bull, standing to right.

5. The device is an unusually clear and perfect representation of a *stūpa*, hemispherical in form, resting on a platform, surrounded by a three-barrel railing, with box-like receptacle or railing on the top.

6. The device is the representation of a lion standing, to right, over the prostrate form of some other animal, presumably a deer whose head bent back so as to be looking downwards. The forelegs of the lion are upon this figure, and his tail is swishing proudly in the air.

7. The device is a central figure of Lakshmī standing on a low pedestal, facing, with the two customary elephants above, pouring water over her from jars held in their trunks.

8. The device is a bull, facing and standing in the centre. There is a legend in a continuous circle around the edge. Professor Rapson and Professor Venis translate the legend thus:—(The seal) of the Great Queen Prabhudamā, sister of the king of the Mahākshatrapa Svāmī-Rudrasena, and daughter of the king of Mahākshatrapa Svāmī-Rudrasiṁha.

9. The device is a tall standing figure, facing with the upper part of the body bent considerably to the left. The left hand is resting on the hip; the right is extended towards the right as in the Vardhamudrā. The figure is seemingly nude, but there are draperies floating to left and right. The most curious feature of all is head-dress which she wears, like a single high horn with streamer floating to the left.

10. The device is a tall, well built male figure, nude, standing to left with graceful draperies floating to either side. The left arm is resting on the hip; the right arm is extended towards the left.

11. The device is a very bold, heraldic lion, sejant, to left tail held high above the back. The animal rests on a square pedestal and bears a considerable resemblance to the big lion on the top of the Mauryan Column at Kolhua in the vicinity of Vaiśālī Basārh).

Among the minor antiquities recovered from Vaiśālī are beads, bangles, terracotta cylinders, potters, dabbers, spindlewhorls, discs or moulds for stamping ornamental medallions, combs, iron axe-head, etc. The collection of beads is remarkable in its own way. Some of the very interesting pieces are as follows:—

1. Bead of crystal, barrel shaped.
2. Opaque grey and highly polished also banded red with white spots and of bluish grey colour.
3. Opaque, pinkish white.
4. Agate, grey, barrel shaped.
5. Agate, white, brown and amber colour.
6. Translucent blue cube.
7. Translucent red, three sided.
8. Translucent yellowish white.
9. Green glass, barrel shaped.

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10. Blue glass.
11. Yellow with dotted bands round, and spotted with white.
12. Brown cylindrical.
13. Black, banded with white.
14. Reddish brown spotted with white.
15. Cornelian, red.
16. Amathyst barrel shaped.
17. White quartz, etc.

Not only in Pāṭaliputra and modern Patna which are already known to scholars but also in Vaiśālī itself very interesting and varied specimens of terracotta male and female and animal figurines have been found. The Vaiśālī figurines which give supplementary insight into the fashion of the day are remarkable specimens of the Śuṅga and post-Śuṅga periods. Some of them may be described thus :—

1. Female figurine. Head ornaments and jewellery affixed. Breast chain pendant to naval, covers high breasts. Wearing heavy earrings. This is more or less similar to a figure unearthed at Bulandibagh.
2. Plaque with standing winged figure with a long and slim body.
3. Fragment of a very thin rectangular plaque from an excellent mould of two slim figures. Body in front view standing on the right foot, shown in profile. Long and transparent loin cloth may be seen around the legs of the figures.
4. Squatting pot-bellied male figurine with knees wide apart and hands on thighs. Sex is exposed.
5. Round plaque with three pairs of wrestlers.
6. Head with a certain amount of Hellenistic modelling. Wide open eyes and lips opened.
7. Bust with nimbate head and flat heavy head dress. The left hand is held against the breast with a lotus flower on the shoulder and the right hand upholds a round object which looks like a fruit.

Quite good many animal figurines and toys for children have also been unearthed. Some of them are as follows:—

1. Head of bull with eyes and ringlets impressed.
2. Horse. Head caprisoned and trappings affixed.
3. Fish having lines on fins.
4. Hind part of a squirrel. A similar specimen has been found in Patna.
5. Elephant.
6. Ram.
7. Bear.
8. Head of monkey.
9. Duck.
10. Tortoise, etc.
11. Ram, tricycle. Muzzle holed.

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VAISĀLĪ, THE BIRTHPLACE OF LORD MAHĀVĪRA

PROF. YOGENDRA MISHRA, M.A., SAHITYARATNA

It is an irony to find that the Jains of modern times do not know correctly where Mahāvīra Vardhamāna, their twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara, was born. Some of them regard Kshatriyakuṇḍa and Lichchhuār (or Lichchhawār) in the Monghyr district (near Lakkhisarai Junction) as Mahāvīra's birthplace; others, especially the Digambaras, regard Kuṇḍalapura, a village two miles from Nālandā, as the place where the great Jain prophet was born. Evidently both the views are wrong and based on misconception and an incorrect reading of the Jain Scriptures. As a matter of fact, Mahāvīra was born at Kuṇḍagrāma near Vaiśālī (Basāṛh in the Hajipur sub-division of Muzaffarpur district). Kuṇḍagrāma is represented by Basukuṇḍ these days.

Our arguments for regarding Basukuṇḍ and Vaiśālī as Mahāvīra's birthplace and discarding Lichchhuār-Kshatriyakuṇḍa or Kuṇḍalapura as such are as follows:—

1. Mahāvīra is also known as Videha, Videhadatta, Videhasukumāla and Vaiśālika. This indicates that he was born not in Aṅga (near Lakkhisarai Junction in the Monghyr district) or Magadha (near Nālandā), but in Videha and at Vaiśālī. All scholars agree that Vaiśālī, the ancient Lichchhavi capital, is represented by Basāṛh.

2. Videha is north of the Ganges, while the modern Kshatriyakuṇḍa is south of the Ganges. Thus the so-called birthplace of Mahāvīra is not situated in Videha.

3. In the ancient Jain books Kshatriyakuṇḍa is shown near Vaiśālī. The modern so-called Kshatriyakuṇḍa has no Vaiśālī near it.

4. There is a *nālā* near the present Kshatriyakuṇḍa; this cannot be the Gaṇḍak. The Gaṇḍak river flows near Vaiśālī even today.

5. In the ancient Jain Scriptures there are no references to mountains when Kshatriyakuṇḍa is mentioned. Indeed, Kuṇḍagrāma, as the name itself indicates, was a village. There are no mountains at or near Basukuṇḍ or Vaiśālī, whereas the so-called Kshatriyakuṇḍa of these days is situated on the mountain. Thus Basukuṇḍ near Vaiśālī seems to be the real birthplace of Mahāvīra, and not Lichchhuār or Kshatriyakuṇḍa or Kuṇḍalapura.

6. The people of Vaiśālī and the adjoining areas regard Basukuṇḍ as the birthplace of Mahāvīra. Thus tradition also supports our view.

Below we propose to quote the views of eminent European and Indian scholars to show that they too regard Vaiśālī as the birthplace of Mahāvīra or that Basāṛh is identified with the ancient capital of the Lichchhavis to which clan Mahāvīra belonged.

1. In the Sacred Books of the East, Volumes 22 (Jaina Sūtras, Part One) and 45 (Jaina Sūtras, Part Two) are devoted to the Jain sacred books. They have been translated into English by Hermann Jacobi, one of the greatest authorities on Jainism and Jain Literature. In Vol. 22, pp. x-xiii (Introduction) he has discussed the birthplace and parentage of Lord Mahāvīra. There he says:—

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"The Jainas, both Svetāmbaras and Digambaras, state that Mahāvīra was the son of King Siddhārtha of Kuṇḍapura or Kuṇḍagrāma. Kuṇḍagrāma is called in the Āchārāṅga Sūtra a Saṁnivesa, a term which the commentator interprets as denoting a halting-place of caravans or processions. By combining occasional hints in the Bauddha and Jaina scriptures we can, with sufficient accuracy, point out where the birthplace of Mahāvīra was situated; for in the Mahāvagga of the Buddhists we read that Buddha, while sojourning at Koṭiggāma, was visited by the courtezan Ambapāli and the Lichchhavis of the neighbouring capital Vesāli. From Koṭiggāma he went to where the Ñātikas (lived). There he lodged in the Ñātika Brick-hall. From there he went to Vesāli, where he converted the general-in-chief (of the Lichchhavis), a lay-disciple of the Nirgranthas (or Jaina monks). Now it is highly probable that the Koṭiggāma of the Buddhists is identical with the Kuṇḍaggāma of the Jainas. Apart from the similarity of the names, the mentioning of the Ñātikas, apparently identical with the Jñātṛika Kshatriyas to whose clan Mahāvīra belonged, and of Sīha, the Jaina, point to the same direction. Kuṇḍagrāma, therefore, was probably one of the suburbs of Vaiśālī, the capital of Videha. This conjecture is borne out by the name Vesālie, i.e., Vaiśālika given to Mahāvīra in the Sūtra-kṛitāṅga I, 3. Vaiśālika apparently means a native of Vaiśālī; and Mahāvīra could rightly be called that when Kuṇḍagrāma was a suburb of Vaiśālī.

Siddhārtha's wife Triśalā was sister to Cheṭaka, king of Vaiśālī. She is called Vaidehī or Videhadattā, because she belonged to the reigning line of Videha, [Thus Mahāvīra was connected by blood with the important republican chiefs of the time]. Again, on the death of Mahāvīra the eighteen confederate kings [of Kāśī and Kośala, the Lichchhavis and Mallakis,] instituted a festival to be held in memory of that event. We are enabled to understand why the Buddhists took no notice of Cheṭaka, as his influence was not very great, and besides, was used in the interest of their rivals. But the Jainas cherished the memory of the maternal uncle and patron of their prophet, to whose influence we must attribute the fact, that Vaiśālī used to be a stronghold of Jainism, while being looked upon by the Buddhists as a seminary of heresies and dissent."

The same authority, writing about Mahāvīra in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 7, p. 466 (s. v. Jainism), says:—

"He was a Kṣatriya of the Jñāta clan and a native of Kuṇḍagrāma, a suburb of the town Vaiśālī (the modern Basāṛh, some 27 miles north of Patna). Kuṇḍaggāma and Vāṇiyaggāma, both suburbs of Vesāli, have been identified by Hoernle with the modern villages, Baniyā and Basukuṇḍ."

2. Dr. A. F. Rudolf Hoernle, in whose masterly address delivered to the Asiatic Society of Bengal on the 2nd February, 1898 a convenient summary of the Jain traditions with references to the original sources will be found, in his Translation of the Uvāsagadasāo (Bibliotheca Indica Series) has clearly shown (pages 3-6) that modern Basāṛh is the birthplace of Lord Mahāvīra. He says:—

"Vāṇiyagāma, Skr. Vāṇijagrāma; another name of the well-known city of Vesāli (Skr. Vaishālī), the capital of the Licchavi country. In the Kalpa Sūtra, § 122, it is mentioned separately, but in close conjunction with Vesālī. The fact is, that the city commonly called Vesali occupied a very extended area, which included with its circuit, besides Vesāli proper (now Besāṛh), several other places. Among the latter were Vāṇiyagāma and Kuṇḍagāma or Kuṇḍapura. These still exist as villages under the names of Baniyā and Basukuṇḍ. Hence the joint-city might be called, according to circumstances, by any of the names of its constituent parts...... Under the name of Kuṇḍagāma, the city of Vesālī is mentioned as the birthplace of Mahāvīra, who hence is sometimes called Vesālie

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or the 'man of Vesālī'........ Mahāvīra's father, Siddhattha, was the chief of the Nāya-clan, resident in the Kollāga suburb of the city of Vesālī or Kuṇḍagāma."

3. Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, M. A., Sc. D., in her famous book, The Heart of Jainism (pages 21-22), writes:—

"Some two thousand years ago in Besārh the same divisions existed as would be found today; and there in fact, the priestly (Brāhman), the warrior (Kṣatriya), and the commercial (Baniyā) communities lived so separately that their quarters were sometimes spoken of as though they had been distinct villages, as Vaiśālī, Kuṇḍagrāma, and Vāṇijyagrāma. Strangely enough, it was not in their own but in the Kṣatriya ward that the man was born who was to be the great hero of the Baniyā, and who was to found amongst these commercial people a religion which, with all its limitations, yet made one of the most emphatic protests the world has ever known against accounting luxury, wealth, or comfort the main things in life. It seems almost paradoxical also that the warrior caste should produce the great apostle of non-killing. He was afterwards known from his exploits as Mahāvīra—the great hero—but his earliest name he derived from his birthplace, being known simply as Vaiśāliya, 'the man of Vaiśālī' (the main ward of the town)."

The same writer writes on p. 28 of that book:—

"It is only through the labours of European scholars like Jacobi, Hoernle and Bühler that Mahāvīra's historical existence has been proved. It seems strange that the Jainas should still be dependent on the labours of scholars of another faith and speech for all they know about their greatest hero !"

4. Dr. Vincent A. Smith, the famous historian, also believes that Vaiśālī was the birthplace of Lord Mahāvīra. In J. R. A. S., 1902 (on pages 282-3, 286-7) he writes:—

"According to Jain tradition, Vaisāli consisted of three distinct portions, Vaisāli proper, Kuṇḍagāma, and Vāṇiyagāma, besides the Kollāga suburb. Vaisāli proper has been sufficiently identified as being represented by Bisālgaṛh and an indeterminate portion of the other extensive ruins. The village of Baniyā (with the adjacent Chak Rāmdās) is almost certainly the representative of Vāṇiyagāma. The lands of the village contain "extensive mounds", and some ten years ago two statues of Jain Tīrthaṁkaras, one seated, the other standing, were discovered about eight feet below the surface, and 500 yards west of the village. Vāṇiyagāma was the residence of Mahāvīra, the great prophet of the Jains, and this discovery of Jain images strongly confirms the identification suggested by the name. ......Kollāga is probably now represented by the village situated close to the Monkey Tank called Kolluā or Kolhuā, on the eastern side of which a large mound exists. ......Kuṇḍagāma, the Brahman section of Vaisāli, may be represented by the hamlet called Basukuṇḍ."

The same authority, writing in 1921 in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 12, pp. 567-68 (s. v. Vaisali), says:—

"The ancient city of Vaisali was equally sacred to the Jains and the Buddhists long ago. It is now represented unquestionably by the village named Basāṛh situated in the Hajipur sub-division of the Muzaffarpur district. The identity of Vaisali with the group of remains associated with the village of Basāṛh is conclusively proved

(*i*) by the survival of the ancient name with only slight modifications;

(*ii*) by geographical bearings taken from Patna and other places;

(*iii*) by topographical details as compared with the description recorded by Hiuen Tsiang, the Chinese pilgrim in the 7th cent.; and

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(*iv*) by the finding on the spot of sealings of letters inscribed with the name Vesāli.

Few places in India have stronger claims upon the veneration of both Jains and Buddhists. Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, commonly spoken of as the founder of the Jain Church, belonged to a noble family of Vaisali, where he was born and spent all his earlier life. After he had entered upon the ascetic career, he is said to have resided in his native town or the immediate neighbourhood for twelve rainy seasons. The Jain scriptures often mention Vaisali. The archaeologists have not sought for Jain remains on the site, and nothing in their reports would lead the reader to suppose that the Basāṛh area was the birthplace of Jainism, as it is known to the moderns."

5. Dr. Jarl Charpentier, Ph. D., University of Upsala, writes in the Cambridge History of India, Vol. I, p. 157:—

"Just outside Vaisali lay the suburb Kundagrāma—probably surviving in the modern village of Basukuṇḍ—and here lived a wealthy nobleman Siddhartha, head of a certain warrior-clan called the Jnatrikas. This Siddhartha was the father of Vardhamāna Mahāvīra."

6. A Buddhist tradition quoted by Rockhill (Life of Buddha, p. 62) mentions the city of Vesali as consisting of three districts:—"There were three districts in Vesali. In the first district were 7000 houses with golden towers, in the middle district were 14000 houses with silver towers, and in the last district were 21000 houses with copper towers; in these lived the upper, the middle, and the lower classes, according to their positions." These may very well have been Vesali proper, Kuṇḍapura and Vāniyagāma, occupying respectively the south-eastern, north-eastern, and western portions of the area of the total city. [Dr. Hoernle's Translation of Uvāsagadasāo, pp. 4, 6.]

7. Cunningham in his Archaeological Survey of India Reports, Vols. I and XVI and in his Ancient Geography of India has identified Vaiśālī with Basāṛh in the Muzaffarpur district.

In his Archaeological Survey of India Reports Vol. XVI he throws some light on the Kūṭāgāra hall which may have something to do with Kuṇḍaggāma, the birthplace of Mahāvīra. From the Divya Avadāna it is known that on the bank of the Markaṭahrada stood the Kūṭāgāra hall, where Buddha addressed his disciples after having announced to Ānanda his approaching Nirvāṇa. A little north-west to the city of Vaiśālī Cunningham found the tank which now-a-days is called Rāma-Kuṇḍa. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsiang has also described the tank and the nearby monuments. Cunningham noticed several eminences to the west and south of the tank which looked like heaps of rubbish from which bricks had been removed. Here was found a thick wall running from east to west, made of well-burnt bricks 15½ by 9½ by 2 inches. Judging from its thickness Cunningham thinks that the wall must have formed part of some large building, and most probably of the Kūṭāgāra hall—which is known to be situated on the bank of the Monkey Tank. If Kūṭāgāra hall has got to do anything with Kuṇḍaggāma, it confirms the existence of Kuṇḍaggāma as a suburb of Vaiśālī.

8. Dr. T. Bloch, in Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report for 1903-04 (pp. 81-122) gives an account of 'Excavations at Basāṛh.' There on p. 82 he says:—

"Mahāvīra, the last of the Jaina Tīrthaṁkaras, is called *Vesālie*, "a native of Vaiśālī" in the Jaina Scriptures and it is also related there that his birthplace, Kuṇḍagāma, lay in Videha. Videha and Tīra-bhukti, however, are used almost synonymously by ancient authors. An identification of Vaiśālī with a place outside the borders of Tirhut, therefore, appears *primâ facie* very unlikely, the more so when there is an ancient site in Tirhut [i.e., Basāṛh] which fulfils all the necessary requirements."

9. Dr. D. B. Spooner, in Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report for 1913-14 (pp. 98-185)

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thinks that for the identification of Vaiśālī with Basāṛh there is not inconsiderable body of evidence to support this (p. 98).

10. F. E. Pargiter in his Ancient Indian Historical Tradition gives an account of the dynastic history of pre-historic Vaiśālī which later turned to be the glorious capital of the ancient Lichchhavi republic.

11. Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley, I.C.S., in Muzaffarpur District Gazetteer, has accepted Basāṛh as the site of Vaiśālī, the ancient Lichchhavi capital.

12. The Imperial Gazetteer of India (New Edn., Oxford, 1908) also has accepted the identification of Vaiśālī with modern Basāṛh (Vol. 7 p. 94 and Vol. 24 pp. 294-95).

13. The writer in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th edition, Vol. 12, p. 868 (London, 1929) says:—

"Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, their (i.e., the Jains') last leader, is identifiable on strong grounds with Nigantha Nata-putta (Nirgrantha of the Jnatrika clan) of the Buddhist *Piṭakas* and Buddha's contemporary. Mahāvīra is said to have been a Kshatriya (like all the rest of the 24 Jins) of Vaishali, 27 m. north of Patna."

14. The writers in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (e.g., Jacobi and V. A. Smith, both already quoted in this article) also hold that Mahāvīra belonged to Vaiśālī.

Let us now consider the views of some important Indian scholars.

15. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan in his Indian Philosophy Vol. I says that Vardhamāna was born at Vaiśālī about 599 B. C. and that the Nātaputta of Pali Buddhist literature is Vardhamāna.

16. Dr. Surendranath Dasgupta, in his A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 173 (Cambridge, 1922) says:—

"Mahāvīra, the last prophet of the Jains, was a Kṣatriya of the Jñāta clan and a native of Vaiśālī (modern Basāṛh), 27 miles north of Patna. He was the second son of Siddhārtha and Triśalā."

17. Dr. B. C. Law also holds that Mahāvīra belonged to Vaiśālī (see his Tribes in Ancient India, Vaiśāli and Mahāvira in Jaina Antiquary, and numerous other articles).

18. Śrī Rāhula Sāṅkṛityāyana in his Darśana-Dīgdarśana, p. 492 (Allahabad, 1944) says that Vardhamāna Jñātṛiputra (=Nātaputta), the founder of Jainism, was one of the teachers who flourished in the time of Buddha. He was born in the Jñātṛi clan, a branch of the Lichchhavis, at Vaiśālī (modern Basāṛh, 27 miles north of Patna), the capital of the ancient Vajji republic (Muzaffarpur District in Bihar). Further he says that Vardhamāna's father was a member of the republican Senate (Gaṇa-Saṁsthā).

19. Dr. V. S. Agrawala, in his Preface to a Hindi brochure entitled 'Vaiśālī' (written by Śrī Vijayendra Sūri), says that Mahāvīra was born in the Kshatriya ward of Kuṇḍapura which may be identified with the village Basukuṇḍ near Vaiśālī (in the Muzaffarpur district).

20. Prof. Baladeva Upadhyaya of Benares Hindu University also believes that Mahāvīra was born at Kshatriya Kuṇḍagrāma (Muzaffarpur district). He says that the popular Jain belief of regarding Lichchhu-ār (near Kiul Station) as the birthplace of Mahāvīra is based on wrong notions and should be discarded at once.

21. Dr. G. P. Malalasekera in his Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Vol. II, p. 943 (London, 1938) accepts Basāṛh (Muzaffarpur District) as the ancient Vaiśālī and says (Vol. I., p. 64) that Mahāvīra belonged to the Nāta (or Nāya) clan of Vesāli.

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Let us consider the views of some Jain scholars as well.

22. Mr. Chimanlal J. Shah, M. A., in his Jainism in North India 800 B.C.—A.D. 526, says (pp. 23-24):—

"Mahāvīra is believed to have been born of Triśalā, near the town of Vaiśālī, nearly twenty-seven miles north of Patna. His father, Siddhārtha, seems to have been a chieftain of Kuṇḍagrāma village, and his mother, Princess Triśalā, was the sister of the chieftain of Vaiśālī, the capital of Videha, and was related also to Bimbisāra, King of Magadha."

23. Paṇḍita Kalyāṇavijaya Jī Gaṇī, a famous Jain scholar, has written a life of Śramaṇa Bhagavān Mahāvīra in which (Introduction, pp. xxv-xxviii) he shows that Mahāvīra was born at Kuṇḍagrāma near Vaiśālī in Videha.

24. Śrī Vijayendra Sūri, another Jain scholar, has written a brochure in Hindi called 'Vaiśālī,' wherein he gives strong arguments for accepting Kuṇḍagrāma near Vaiśālī (Muzaffarpur district) as the real birthplace of the twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara.

Now that Vaiśālī (or Kuṇḍagrāma near it) is proved to be the birthplace of Mahāvīra, the Jain community owes a great duty to the birthplace of its prophet. Indeed there should be some shrine and also some Guest House for visitors. A good library of Jain literature and a Museum of Vaiśālī Antiquities should also be established. The Jain community should organise every year at Vaiśālī Śrī Mahāvīra-Janma-Kalyāṇaka-Pūjā on the thirteenth day of the bright fortnight of the month of Chaitra which is the birthday of Lord Mahāvīra. The place must be brought into limelight and in this connection the Jain community should not forget its duty.

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वैशाली

श्री दिनकर

ओ भारत की भूमि वन्दिनी ! ओ जंजीरोंवाली !
तेरी ही क्या कुक्षि फाड़ कर जन्मी थी वैशाली ?
वैशाली ! इतिहास-पृष्ठ पर अंकन अंगारों का
वैशाली ! अतीत-गह्वर में गुंजन तलवारों का
वैशाली ! जन का प्रतिपालक, गण का आदि विधाता !
जिसे ढूँढ़ता देश आज उस प्रजातन्त्र की माता
रुको, एक क्षण पथिक ! यहाँ मिट्टी को शीश नवाओ
राजसिद्धियों की समाधि पर फूल चढ़ाते जाओ
डूबा है दिनमान इसी खँड़हर में डूबी राका
छिपी हुई है यहीं कहीं धूलों में राजपताका
ढूँढ़ो उसे, जगाओ उनको जिनकी ध्वजा गिरी है
जिनके सो जाने से सिर पर काली घटा घिरी है
कहो, जगाती है उनको बन्दिनी बेड़ियोंवाली
नहीं उठे वे तो न बसेगी किसी तरह वैशाली

× × × ×

फिर आते जागरण-गीत टकरा अतीत-गह्वर से
उठती है आवाज एक वैशाली के खँड़हर से
"करना हो साकार स्वप्न को तो बलिदान चढ़ाओ
ज्योति चाहते हो तो पहले अपनी शिखा जलाओ
जिस दिन एक ज्वलन्त पुरुष तुम में से बढ़ आयेगा
एक-एक कण इस खँड़हर का जीवित हो जायेगा
किसी जागरण की प्रत्याशा में हम पड़े हुए हैं
लिच्छवि नहीं मरे, जीवित मानव ही मरे हुए हैं।"

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जैन दृष्टिकोण से वैशाली

जैनाचार्य श्रीविजयेन्द्र सूरि, इतिहासतत्त्वमहोदधि

भौगोलिक स्थिति

प्राचीन वैदिक साहित्य में विदेह की राजधानी मिथिला बताई गई है[1] और बृहद्विष्णुपुराण में विदेह की सीमा बताते हुए लिखा है : विदेह के पूर्व में कौशिकी (आधुनिक कोशी), पश्चिम में गण्डकी, दक्षिण में गंगा और उत्तर में हिमालय है। पूर्व से पश्चिम की ओर २४ योजन (लगभग १८० मील) और उत्तर से दक्षिण में १६ योजन (लगभग १२५ मील) है। इसी प्रकार विक्रम सं० १२ वीं शताब्दी के जैनग्रन्थ प्रवचनसारोद्धार[2] तथा विक्रम सं० १४वीं शताब्दी के विविध तीर्थकल्प[3] में विदेह जनपद की राजधानी मिथिला बताई है। विविधतीर्थकल्प में ही विदेह जनपद को भारतवर्ष के पूर्वदेश में बताया है तथा इसका प्रचलित नाम 'तिरहुत' लिखा है। परन्तु इन दोनों ग्रन्थों से भी बहुत प्राचीन ग्रन्थ निरयावलियाओ[4] में विदेह की राजधानी वैशाली बताई है तथा विक्रम सं० १२वीं शताब्दी में निर्मित त्रिषष्टिशलाका पुरुषचरितम्[5] में भी विदेह की राजधानी वैशाली होने की पुष्टि की गई है।

ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि भिन्न-भिन्न कालों में विदेह की राजधानी में परिवर्तन होता रहा है। वैदिक साहित्य के प्रसिद्ध जनकों की राजधानी मिथिला रही होगी और बाद में वहाँ से उठ कर वैशाली में राजधानी आ गई होगी।[6] एक ही काल में होनेवाले लिच्छवियों, बुद्ध और महावीर स्वामी के समय में विदेह की राजधानी वैशाली होने का सर्वत्र ही उल्लेख मिलता है। महावीर स्वामी के भिन्न-भिन्न नामों में उनके १. विदेह २. वैदेहदत्ता ३. विदेहजात्य और ४. विदेहसुकुमार नाम जैनग्रन्थों[7] में मिलते हैं, साथ ही वेसालिय (=वैशालिक) नाम का भी उल्लेख मिलता है।[8] इन नामों से यह स्पष्ट रूप से प्रकट होता है कि महावीर स्वामी के समय विदेह जनपद की प्रमुख नगरी वैशाली थी, उसी जनपद और नगरी के साथ विशिष्ट सम्बन्ध होने के कारण ही महावीर स्वामी को उपर्युक्त नाम प्राप्त हुए थे। महावीर स्वामी के कुल चातुर्मासों में से १९ चातुर्मास विदेह में हुए थे--१२ चातुर्मास वैशाली में, ६ मिथिला में और १ अस्थिगाँव[9] में। इन चातुर्मासों से यह भी प्रकट है कि महावीर स्वामी के समय मिथिला नगर की सत्ता तो थी, पर वह प्रमुखतम नगर न था।

[1] शतपथ ब्राह्मण प्रथमकाण्ड, ४ अ० १ ब्रा०; बृहद्विष्णुपुराण मिथिलाखण्ड।

[2] प्रवचनसारोद्धार वृत्तिसहित पत्र ४४६

[3] विविधतीर्थकल्प (सिन्धी ग्रन्थमाला) पृष्ठ ३२

[4] निरयावलियाओ (ए० एस० गोपानी और वी० जे० चोक्षी द्वारा सम्पादित), पृष्ठ २६।

[5] त्रिषष्टिशलाका पुरुषचरितम् पत्र ७७, (पर्व १०, सर्ग ६)।

[6] हमारे इस कथन की पुष्टि श्री जयचन्द्र विद्यालंकार ने अपनी 'भारतीय इतिहास की रूपरेखा' में और श्री एस० एन० सिंह ने 'दी हिस्ट्री ऑफ तिरहुत' में की है।

[7] आचाराङ्गसूत्र पत्र ३८९।

[8] भगवतीसूत्र सटीक भाग १, पृष्ठ २३१; और सूत्रकृताङ्गशीलांकाचार्यकृत टीका सहित--अध्याय २, उद्दे० ३।

[9] आधुनिक 'हाथागाँव' जो कि मुजफ्फरपुर से २० मील पूर्व में बागमती नदी के निकट है।

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वैशाली और राजा चेटक

ऊपर महावीर स्वामी के नामों में वैदेहदत्ता नाम का उल्लेख किया गया है। यह नाम उन्हें विदेहदत्तापुत्र होने के कारण प्राप्त हुआ था। विदेहदत्ता[1] उनकी माता त्रिशला का नाम था। यह नाम उनकी माता को इसलिए प्राप्त हुआ था, क्योंकि माता त्रिशला विदेह देश की नगरी वैशाली के गणसत्ताक राजा चेटक की बहिन थी।[2] यह घराना विदेह नाम से प्रसिद्ध था। इसी कारण माता त्रिशला को विदेहदत्ता कहा गया है।

निरयावलियाओ[3] के अनुसार राजा चेटक वैशाली का अधिपति था और उसे परामर्श देने के लिए नौ मल्ल गणराजा और नौ लिच्छवि गणराजा रहा करते थे। मल्ल जाति काशी में रहती थी और लिच्छवि कोशल में रहते थे। इन दोनों जातियों का एक सम्मिलित गणतन्त्र राज्य था जिसकी राजधानी वैशाली और इसी गणतन्त्र का अध्यक्ष अथवा अधिपति चेटक था। इस राजा चेटक के पारिवारिक इतिहास के सम्बन्ध में आवश्यकचूर्णि[4] में इस प्रकार वर्णन मिलता है : 'वैशाली नगरी में हैहय वंश में राजा चेटक का जन्म हुआ था। इस राजा की भिन्न-भिन्न रानियों से सात पुत्रियाँ हुई थीं जिनके नाम ये थे : १. प्रभावती २. पद्मावती ३. मृगावती ४. शिवा ५. ज्येष्ठा ६. सुज्येष्ठा और ७ चेल्लणा।....प्रभावती वीतिभय के उदायन से, पद्मावती चम्पा के दधिवाहन से, मृगावती कौशाम्बी के शतानीक से, शिवा उज्जयिनी के प्रद्योत से और ज्येष्ठा कुण्डगाम के वर्धमान स्वामी के बड़े भाई नन्दिवर्धन से ब्याही गई थीं। सुज्येष्ठा और चेल्लणा तबतक कुमारी ही थीं।'

उपर्युक्त वर्णन महावीरचरित्र[5] में भी ज्यों-का-त्यों मिलता है। इसी ग्रन्थ के अनुसार बाद में मगध के राजा श्रेणिक (=बिम्बिसार) ने राजा चेटक से सुज्येष्ठा से ब्याह करने की प्रार्थना की; परन्तु राजा चेटक ने उत्तर दिया : 'वाहीक कुल में उत्पन्न होकर हैहयवंश की कन्या चाहता है !'[6] इस प्रकार सुज्येष्ठा का श्रेणिक से विवाह करना अस्वीकार कर दिया। तब श्रेणिक ने सुज्येष्ठा की अनुमति से उसके हरण की योजना गढ़ी, पर भाग्यवश वह सुज्येष्ठा से छोटी कन्या चेल्लणा का ही हरण कर सका और उसने उसी से ब्याह कर लिया।

इस घटनाचक्र से यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि राजा चेटक तथा उस समय के अन्य लोग भी वाहीक कुल के इस राजघराने को घृणा की दृष्टि से देखते थे। वस्तुतः बात यह थी कि मगध का राजघराना वहाँ का नहीं था, अपितु पंजाब से मगध की ओर आया था। इस कुल के सम्बन्ध में यह प्रसिद्धि थी कि यह वंश वहि और हीक नाम के दुष्टात्माओं का वंश है।[7] इसलिए अन्य लोग इस वंश से घृणा करते थे।

राजा चेटक और कूणिक

भाग्य की विडम्बना ही कहनी चाहिए कि राजा चेटक की अध्यक्षता में जिस वैशाली गणतन्त्र का विकास हुआ था और जिसने

[1] आचाराङ्गसूत्र पत्र ३८९ में पाठ इस प्रकार है : 'समणस्स णं भगवओ महावीरस्स अम्मा वासिठ्ठस्सगुत्ता तीसे णं तिन्नि ना०, तं०--तिसला इवा विदेहदिन्ना इवा पियकारिणी इवा।'

[2] आवश्यक चूर्णि (पूर्व भाग) पत्र २४५ में पाठ इस प्रकार है : 'भगवतो माया चेऽगस्स भगिणी, भो(जा) यी चेऽगस्स धूया'। अर्थात् भगवान् महावीर की माता चेटक की बहिन थी और भौजाई चेटक की पुत्री थी।

[3] निरयावलियाओ, पृष्ठ २७।

[4] पाठ इस प्रकार है : एतो य वेसालीए नगरीए चेऽओ राया हेहय कुलसंभूतो। तस्स देवीणं अण्णभण्णाणं सत्त धूताओ। पभावती, पउमावतो, मिगावती, सिवा, जेठ्ठा, सुजेठ्ठा, चेलणत्ति। सो चेऽओ सावओ परविवाह करणस्स पच्चक्खातं। धूताओ ण देति कस्सत्ति। ताओ याति मिस्सगाओ रायं आपुच्छित्ता अण्णेसिं इच्छितकाणं सरिसगाणं देति। पभावती वीतिभए उद्दायणस्स दिण्णा, पउमावती चंपाए दहिवाहणस्स, मिगावती कोसंबीए सत्ताणियस्स, सिवा उज्जेणीए पज्जोतस्स, जेठ्ठा कुंडग्गामे वद्धमाणसामिणो जेठ्ठस्स नन्दिवद्धणस्स दिण्णा। सुजेठ्ठा चेलणा य दो कण्णगाओ अच्छंति।--आवश्यकचूर्णि (उत्तरभाग) पत्र १६४।

[5] श्री हेमचन्द्राचार्य विरचित त्रिषष्टिशलाका पुरुषचरित्र, पर्व १०, सर्ग ६, श्लोक १८४-१९३।

[6] मूलपाठ इस प्रकार है :

'वाहीककुलजो वाञ्छन् कन्यां हैहयवंशजाम् !'
त्रि० श० पु० च० पर्व १०, सर्ग ६, श्लोक २२६।

[7] महाभारत कर्णपर्व में इस वंश के सम्बन्ध में लिखा है :

वहिश्च नाम हीकश्च विपाशायां पिशाचको।
तयोरपत्यं वाहीकाः नैषा सृष्टिः प्रजापतेः॥

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इस काल में अपने संगठन और न्यायप्रियता के लिए इतनी प्रसिद्धि प्राप्त की थी, उस का नाश चेल्लणा के पुत्र और चेटक के दौहित्र तथा मगध के अधिपति राजा कूणिक (=अजातशत्रु) वाहीक द्वारा हुआ। इसकी कथा निरयावलियाओ[1] और त्रिषष्टिशलाकापुरुषचरित्र[2] में इस प्रकार दी है :

श्रेणिक ने अपने जीवनकाल में चेल्लणा के पुत्र और कूणिक के छोटे भाई वेहल्ल[3] को सेयणग हाथी और अट्ठारसवंक हार दिये थे जिन्हें कूणिक की पत्नी ने प्राप्त करने की इच्छा प्रकट की। कूणिक ने इन दोनों वस्तुओं को वेहल्ल से माँगा। वेहल्ल ने उन्हें इस शर्त पर देना स्वीकार किया कि कूणिक उसे अपना आधा राज्य दे दे। पर कूणिक ने उसकी बात पर ध्यान न देकर अपनी माँग को पुनः पुनः दोहराया। वेहल्ल ने यह सोच कर कि यदि मैं ये वस्तुएँ कूणिक को नहीं दूँगा तो मार दिया जाऊँगा, चम्पा से भाग कर अपने नाना राजा चेटक के आश्रय में चला गया। कूणिक ने अपने दूत को भेज कर हाथी, हार और वेहल्ल को चेटक से वापिस माँगा। चेटक ने उत्तर दिया कि 'कूणिक भी राजा श्रेणिक का पुत्र और चेल्लणा से उत्पन्न है, अतएव मेरा दौहित्र है; एवं वेहल्ल भी राजा श्रेणिक का पुत्र और चेल्लणा से उत्पन्न है, अतएव मेरा दौहित्र है। राजा श्रेणिक ने अपने जीवन काल में वेहल्ल को हाथी और हार दिये थे। यदि कूणिक वेहल्ल को आधा राज्य देना स्वीकार करे तो मैं हाथी, हार और वेहल्ल को लौटा दूँगा।' परन्तु कूणिक ने इसे अस्वीकार करके युद्ध-घोषणा की सूचना दी और वैशाली पर आक्रमण कर दिया। राजा चेटक ने भी नवमल्लि और नवलिच्छवि गणराजाओं की सम्मति से उस आक्रमण का प्रतिरोध किया, पर दुर्भाग्य से इस युद्ध में राजा चेटक की हार हुई और इस हार से दुःखी होकर वह एक कुएँ में कूद पड़ा।

गणतन्त्र के पतन का कारण

बौद्ध साहित्य की अनुश्रुतियों के अनुसार तो कूणिक (=अजातशत्रु) ने इस गणतन्त्र में फूट डाल कर इस गणतन्त्र को नष्ट किया था। पर जैनसाहित्य इस सम्बन्ध में चुप है। जैनसाहित्य के अनुसार वैशाली के इस गणतन्त्र को समाप्त करने में कूणिक की साम्राज्य-वादी प्रवृत्ति प्रमुख कारण थी। बौद्धसाहित्य में जहाँ कूणिक ने इस गणतन्त्र को नष्ट करने के लिए बुद्ध से परामर्श माँगा है उस प्रकरण से यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि वैशाली एक संगठित और शक्तिसम्पन्न प्रदेश थी। इसे जानते हुए और गणतन्त्र के अध्यक्ष राजा चेटक से रक्त-सम्बन्ध होते हुए भी कूणिक ने वैशाली को नष्ट करने का जो संकल्प किया था, उससे प्रतीत होता है कि दोनों प्रदेशों के राजघरानों तथा उच्चवर्गों में एक दूसरे के प्रति अत्यन्त द्वेष तथा तीव्र घृणा थी। राजा चेटक ने राजा श्रेणिक को अपनी कन्या देने से अस्वीकार करते हुए जिन वाक्यों का प्रयोग किया है, उनसे हमारे उपर्युक्त अनुमान की पुष्टि होती है। वैशाली के लोग अपने को उच्च कुल का समझते थे और मगध के राजकुल को हीन कुल का। स्वभावतः इस विचार-धारा की प्रतिक्रिया हो सकती है। कूणिक के मन में यह विचार भी हो सकता है कि राजा चेटक द्वारा किये गये अपने कुल के अपमान का प्रतीकार करे।

जैनग्रन्थों[4] और बौद्धग्रन्थों[5] में तत्कालीन वैशाली गणतन्त्र का वर्णन करते हुए उसे अत्यन्त समृद्ध और धन-वैभवसम्पन्न बताया है, इस कारण भी कूणिक की गृध्र-दृष्टि वैशाली पर थी।

बौद्ध साहित्य द्वारा प्रतिपादित कूणिक की राजनीतिक योजनाओं और सैनिक सज्जाओं से भी उपर्युक्त अनुमानों की पुष्टि होती है। जिन योजनाओं को कूणिक बहुत देर से तैयार कर रहा था, उनका तात्कालिक कारण वेहल्ल और हल्ल द्वारा भाग कर चेटक की शरण में जाना बताया गया। इस प्रकार इस गणतन्त्र के नष्ट होने में मुख्यतया तीन कारण थे—प्रथम तो कूणिक की साम्राज्यवादी प्रवृत्ति और देश-विस्तार की इच्छा, दूसरा दोनों राजवंशों में परस्पर द्वेष और घृणा तथा तीसरा वैशाली गणतन्त्र का वैभव।

संक्षेप में जैनदृष्टिकोण से विदेह जनपद की राजधानी वैशाली थी। यह महावीर स्वामी के समय एक गणतन्त्र राज्य था और इसका अध्यक्ष राजा चेटक था। राजा चेटक महावीर स्वामी का मामा था। महावीर स्वामी—जो कि २४वें तीर्थंकर माने जाते हैं—भी इसी वैशाली नगर के निकटस्थ क्षत्रियकुण्ड (आधुनिक बासुकुण्ड) में उत्पन्न हुए थे। वे ३० वर्ष की आयु तक वैशाली में ही रहे। दीक्षा लेने के बाद उन्होंने १२ चातुर्मास वैशाली में किये।

[1] निरयावलियाओ, पृ० २६-२८।

[2] त्रि० श० पु० च० पर्व १०, सर्ग १२।

[3] त्रि० श० पु० च० में हल्ल और वेहल्ल दो भाइयों के नाम का उल्लेख है।

[4] त्रि० श० पु० च० पर्व १०, सर्ग ६, श्लोक १८४।

[5] महापरिनिब्बाणसुत्त १. १।

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संस्कृत-महाकाव्यों और पुराणों में वैशाली

प्रो० जगन्नाथराय शर्मा, एम० ए०; पटना-विश्वविद्यालय

'वैशाली' या 'विशाला' एक प्राचीन नगरी है। पुराणों में इसके विशाल, विशाला तथा वैशाली ये तीन नाम दिये गये हैं। इसकी प्राचीनता निर्विवाद है। पाटलिपुत्र नगर से तो यह अवश्य ही प्राचीन है। जहाँ वाल्मीकीय रामायण में विशाला के नाम से इसका और इसके संस्थापक तथा उसके वंशजों का वंशावली-वर्णन मिलता है, वहाँ पाटलिपुत्र नगर की चर्चा भी नहीं है। इससे स्पष्ट सिद्ध है कि यदि पाटलिपुत्र नगर गंगा के दक्षिण कूल पर उस समय तक बना होता तो रामचन्द्र उसके सम्बन्ध में भी विश्वामित्र से प्रश्न अवश्य करते। भगवान् रामचन्द्र के समय से लगभग ८-१० पीढ़ी पूर्व विशाला नगरी का निर्माण हो चुका था। यह भागवतपुराण और वाल्मीकीय रामायण दोनों ही के आधार पर सिद्ध है। पाटलिपुत्र नगर का निर्माण अजातशत्रु के समय में हुआ था, यह बात प्रसिद्ध है। अजातशत्रु बुद्धदेव का समकालीन था; अतः पाटलिपुत्र नगर का निर्माण केवल ढाई हजार वर्ष पूर्व हुआ था। किन्तु विशाला की प्राचीनता का पता लगाना कठिन है। उसके सम्बन्ध में हम सिर्फ यही कह सकते हैं कि उसका निर्माण आधुनिक ऐतिहासिकों की दृष्टि से प्रागैतिहासिक-काल में भगवान् रामचन्द्र से भी आठ-दश पीढ़ी पूर्व हुआ था। उसकी प्राचीनता की गणना वर्षों में न कर युगों में ही करना उचित होगा।

वैशाली की चर्चा वाल्मीकीय रामायण के आदिकाण्ड के ४५वें, ४६वें और ४७वें सर्गों में की गई है। ४५वें सर्ग में यह कहा गया है कि इसी स्थान पर देवों और दानवों ने समुद्रमन्थन की मन्त्रणा की थी। ४६वें सर्ग में दिति की उस तपस्या का वर्णन है जो उसने इन्द्र को मारनेवाले पुत्र की उत्पत्ति के लिए की थी। उसी सर्ग के अन्त में तथा ४७वें सर्ग के प्रारम्भ में इन्द्र के प्रयत्न से दिति की तपस्या का विफल होना वर्णित है। इसके पश्चात् ४७वें सर्ग के अन्त में विशाला के निर्माण का इतिहास निम्नलिखित ढंग से दिया गया है—

इक्ष्वाकु की रानी अलम्बुषा के एक परम धार्मिक पुत्र हुआ, जिसका नाम था विशाल। उसी ने इस स्थान में विशालापुरी बनवाई।[1]

इसके अनन्तर विशाल से लेकर रामचन्द्र के समकालीन और उनका आतिथ्य करनेवाले विशाला-नरेश सुमति तक की वंशावली दी गई है। वह इस प्रकार है—

(१) विशाल, (२) हेमचन्द्र, (३) सुचन्द्र, (४) धूम्राश्व, (५) सृञ्जय, (६) सहदेव, (७) कुशाश्व, (८) सोमदत्त, (९) काकुत्स्थ और (१०) सुमति।

विशाल-नरेशों के सम्बन्ध में महर्षि विश्वामित्र ने यह कहा है कि वे सब इक्ष्वाकु की कृपा से दीर्घायु, महात्मा, वीर्यशाली और धार्मिक हुए।[2]

केवल चार पुराणों में वैशाली या विशाला की चर्चा पाई जाती है। ये हैं—वाराह, नारदीय, मार्कण्डेय और श्रीमद्भागवत। वाराह पुराण के सातवें अध्याय में विशाल राजा के गया में पिण्डदान करने से उनके पितरों की मुक्ति कही गई है।[3] उसी पुराण के ४८वें अध्याय में भी एक विशाल राजा का उल्लेख है, पर वे काशी नरेश थे, वैशाली नरेश नहीं। नारदीय पुराण के उत्तर खण्ड के ४४वें अध्याय में भी विशालानरेश विशाल की चर्चा की गई है और यह कहा गया है कि वे त्रेता युग में थे। पुत्रहीन होने के कारण पुत्र प्राप्ति के लिए उन्होंने पुरोहितों की राय से गया में पिण्डदान किया और अपने पिता, पितामह तथा प्रपितामह का नरक से उद्धार किया; किन्तु वहाँ विशाल के पिता का नाम 'सित' बतलाया गया है। सम्भव है इक्ष्वाकु का दूसरा नाम 'सित' रहा हो। मार्कण्डेय पुराण में सूर्यवंश-वर्णन

[1] इक्ष्वाकोस्तु नरव्याघ्र पुत्रः परमधार्मिकः। अलंबुषायामुत्पन्नो विशाल इति विश्रुतः। तेन चासीदिह स्थाने विशालेति पुरी कृता ॥११-१२॥ (सर्ग ४७; वा० रामायण आदिकाण्ड)।

[2] इक्ष्वाकोस्तु प्रसादेन सर्वे वैशालिका नृपाः।
दीर्घायुषो महात्मानो वीर्यवन्तः सुधार्मिकाः ॥
(वा० रामायण, सर्ग ४७, श्लोक १८)

[3] देखिए—वाराहपुराण, अध्याय ७, श्लो० १३-१४।

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के प्रसंग में विशाल राजा का नाम आया है। वहाँ अवीक्षित् और वैशालिनी की कथा दी गई है और यह कहा गया है कि वैशालिनी विशालानरेश विशाल की कन्या थी। किन्तु श्रीमद्भागवत के अनुसार अवीक्षित् विशाल से ११ पीढ़ी पहले था। विशाल ने ही वैशाली बसाई। तब फिर अवीक्षित् का विवाह वैशाली नरेश की कन्या से कैसे हुआ? अतः वैशालिनी की कथा कल्पित-सी प्रतीत होती है। मार्कण्डेय पुराण और श्रीमद्भागवत की वंशावलियाँ बहुत-कुछ एक-सी हैं। अन्तर केवल इतना ही है कि श्रीमद्भागवत में राजाओं का केवल नामोल्लेख मात्र है। किन्तु मार्कण्डेय पुराण में उनमें से प्रसिद्ध राजाओं का चरित्र विस्तार से वर्णित है। श्रीमद्भागवत के नवम स्कन्ध के प्रथम अध्याय में सूर्यवंश का वर्णन दिया हुआ है। इसके अनुसार वैवस्वतमनु और उसकी पत्नी श्रद्धा के दश पुत्र हुए। इनके नाम हैं—इक्ष्वाकु, नृग, शर्याति, दिष्ट, धृष्ट, जरूपक, नरिष्यन्त, पृषध्र, नभग और कवि। भागवत पुराण के अनुसार विशाल इक्ष्वाकु का पुत्र नहीं था, वरन् उसके भाई दिष्ट के वंश में उत्पन्न हुआ था। उसकी माता का नाम उक्त पुराण के अनुसार भी अलम्बुषा ही था। श्रीमद्भागवत के अनुसार विशाल के पूर्वजों और वंशजों की सूची यों है—

(१) दिष्ट, (२) भलन्दन, (३) वत्सप्रीति, (४) प्रांशु, (५) प्रमति, (६) खनित्र, (७) चाक्षुष, (८) विविंशति, (९) रम्भ, (१०) खनिनेत्र, (११) करन्धम, (१२) अवीक्षित, (१३) मरुत्त, (१४) दम, (१५) राज्यवर्द्धन, (१६) सुधृति, (१७) नर, (१८) बन्धुमान्, (१९) वेगवान्, (२०) बन्धु, (२१) तृणविन्दु (उसकी पत्नी अलम्बषा), (२२) विशाल (इसीने वैशाली बसाई)[१], (२३) हेमचन्द्र, (२४) धूम्राक्ष, (२५) संयम, (२६) कृशांस्व (उसका भाई देवज या सहदेव), (२६) सोमदत्त, (२७) सुमति, (२८) जनमेजय।[२]

श्रीमद्भागवत पुराण में जो वंशावली दी गई है, उसके अनुसार इक्ष्वाकु के भाई दिष्ट से लेकर रामचन्द्र के समकालीन सुमति तक २७ पीढ़ियाँ बीत चुकी थीं। किन्तु वाल्मीकीय रामायण की वंशावली के अनुसार इक्ष्वाकु से लेकर सुमति तक केवल दश ही पीढ़ियाँ बीती थीं। अब इन दोनों वंशावलियों में कौन-सी ठीक है, इसका निर्णय करना आवश्यक है। सबसे पहली बात तो यह है कि वाल्मीकीय रामायण को छोड़ कर और कहीं विशाल का इक्ष्वाकु का पुत्र होना वर्णित नहीं है। भागवत के अनुसार इक्ष्वाकु के सौ पुत्र थे जिनमें से विकुक्षि (शशाद), निमि और दण्डक ये तीन ही प्रसिद्ध थे। विकुक्षि अयोध्या का, निमि मिथिला का और दण्डक दण्डकारण्य का राजा था। यदि विशाला का निर्माता विशाल भी इक्ष्वाकु का ही पुत्र होता, तो वह भी प्रमुख माना जाता और अन्य ६ पुत्रों के साथ उसकी गणना न करके इक्ष्वाकु के इन तीन पुत्रों के साथ ही उसकी भी गणना होती। अतः श्रीमद्भागवत पुराण के अनुसार विशाल का इक्ष्वाकु का पुत्र नहीं होना ही सत्य प्रतीत होता है। वह इक्ष्वाकु के वंश में है अवश्य; किन्तु वह उसका औरस सन्तान नहीं। अतः उसको दिष्ट का वंशज मानना ही उचित प्रतीत होता है।

वाल्मीकीय रामायण की वंशावली पूरी-पूरी वंशावली नहीं है। इस बात का प्रमाण रामचन्द्र के विवाह के समय में वशिष्ठ द्वारा महाराज दशरथ के पूर्वजों का वर्णन है। उसके अनुसार इक्ष्वाकु से लेकर रामचन्द्र तक ३५ पीढ़ियाँ बीत चुकी थीं।[३] तब इक्ष्वाकु से या उसके भाई दिष्ट से लेकर सुमति तक केवल दश ही पीढ़ियाँ कैसे बीतीं? वाल्मीकीय रामायण के अनुसार विशाल के राजा दीर्घायु थे, पर कितने भी वे दीर्घायु क्यों न हों, रामचन्द्र के तीन-तीन पूर्वजों के समय तक सुमति के एक-एक पूर्वज राज्य करते रहे हों—यह सर्वथा अविश्वसनीय है। अतः हमारी समझ से श्रीमद्भागवत पुराण में जो वैशाली नरेशों की वंशावली दी गई है, वह सम्भव और सत्य है; क्योंकि उसके अनुसार दिष्ट से लेकर सुमति तक २७ पीढ़ियाँ बीती हैं और वाल्मीकीय रामायण के अनुसार इक्ष्वाकु से लेकर रामचन्द्र तक ३५ पीढ़ियाँ बीती हैं। वैशाली-नरेश दीर्घायु प्रसिद्ध ही हैं, अतः जबतक इक्ष्वाकु के वंश में ३५ राजे हुए तबतक दिष्ट के वंश में २७ राजाओं का होना असम्भव नहीं कहा जा सकता।

विशाला के इस इतिवृत्त के अतिरिक्त उसके विस्तार और वैभव का वर्णन महाकाव्यों और पुराणों ने सम्यक् रूप में कहीं नहीं दिया है। किन्तु वैशाली की यह प्राचीनता और उसके नरेशों की अविच्छिन्न वंशपरम्परा तथा माहात्म्य और पराक्रम से यह सूचित होता है कि वैशाली चिरकाल तक शान्ति और समृद्धि का केन्द्र थी।

[१] विशालो वंशकृद्राजा वैशालीम् निर्ममे पुरीम्।
(भा० पुराण, नवम स्कंध अ० २, श्लो० ३३)

[२] एते वैशालभूपालाः तृणविन्दोर्यशोधरां।
(भा० पु० नवम स्कंध, अध्याय २, श्लो० ३६)

[३] देखिए—वा० रामायण, सर्ग ७१, श्लो० १९ से ४५ तक।

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वैदिक काल में वैशाली

श्री मथुराप्रसाद दीक्षित

'ऋग्वेद संहिता' आर्य जाति का प्राचीनतम धर्म-ग्रन्थ है। इसमें आर्यों के आदितम निवास का परिचय है। इसके मन्त्रों की आलोचना करने से यह ज्ञात होता है कि इनके रचना-काल में आर्यगण पञ्चनद प्रदेश के आगे पूर्व की ओर नहीं बढ़ पाये थे। पञ्चनद को वेदों में 'सप्त-सिन्धु' अर्थात् सात नदियोंवाला देश कहा गया है। पारसियों के धर्म-ग्रन्थ 'अवस्ता' में इस प्रदेश का नाम 'हप्त-हिन्दु' है। पारसी लोग 'स' की जगह प्रायः 'ह' का ही प्रयोग और उच्चारण किया करते हैं। यह उच्चारण-भेद है, जिस प्रकार आसामवाले "चाय" को 'शाय' और 'शुक्रवार' को 'खुखुरवार' कहते हैं।

ऋग्वेदोक्त भौगोलिक विवरणों की आलोचना करने से पता चलता है कि पंजाब से ठीक दक्षिण की ओर जो राजपूताना-प्रदेश है, वहाँ पहले एक समुद्र था। वर्तमान सिन्धु-प्रान्त भी किसी समय समुद्र के गर्भ में अवस्थित था। इस बात को सभी भू-तत्त्वविशारद स्वीकार करते हैं। राजपूताना तथा सिन्धु-प्रदेशों की सुविस्तृत बालुका-राशि आज भी इस बात का प्रमाण है कि इस जमीन पर किसी जमाने में एक वृहत् समुद्र था।

ऋग्वेद में पूर्व समुद्र एवं पश्चिम (अपर) समुद्र का भी उल्लेख पाया जाता है। यह पूर्व समुद्र आधुनिक वंगोपसागर नहीं था। यह पंजाब के ठीक पूर्व भाग में अवस्थित था। ऋग्वेदीय युग में यह समुद्र समग्र गांगेय प्रदेश अर्थात् पाञ्चाल, कोशल, वत्स, मगध, विदेह, अंग और वंग आदि देशों की जमीन पर क्रीड़ा कर रहा था। यही कारण है कि ऋग्वेद में इन देशों की चर्चा नहीं पायी जाती है; क्योंकि उस समय तक ये सभी देश सुविस्तृत जल-राशि में निमग्न थे––समुद्र-गर्भ से ये देश तबतक बहिर्भूत नहीं हुए थे।

ऋग्वेद में लोक-प्रसिद्ध गंगा और यमुना आदि नदियों की चर्चा का भी प्रायः अभाव ही है। जहाँ पर सिन्धु, सरस्वती, दृषद्वती, विपाशा आदि नदियों की चर्चा बार-बार आती है, वहाँ गंगा-यमुना जैसी प्रशस्त नदियों की एक या दो जगह चर्चा देख कर हृदय में भारी विस्मय उत्पन्न होता है। किसी-किसी पुरातत्त्व-विशारद के मतानुसार गंगा-यमुना के ये नाम भी किसी-किसी स्त्री के सम्बन्ध में आते हैं; न कि नदी विशेष के विषय में। पर डाक्टर अविनाशचन्द्रदास के मतानुसार इन नदियों का अर्थात् गंगा-यमुना का विस्तार और विकास ऋग्वैदिक युग तक नहीं हो पाया था। वे थोड़ी ही दूर तक बहनेवाली छोटी नदियाँ थीं। ये हिमालय के समतल क्षेत्रों में अवतीर्ण होकर पूर्व समुद्र में निपतित हुई थीं। इसीसे इन दोनों नदियों का गौरव-गान ऋग्वेद में नहीं है। सम्भव है कि उस समय तक गंगा ऋषिकेश अथवा हरिद्वार तथा यमुना कुरु-पाञ्चाल के निकट पूर्व समुद्र में––जो पास में ही अवस्थित था,––मिलती हों।

ऋग्वेद में, एक-दो स्थानों पर, सरयू नदी का भी नाम आता है। कुछेक लोगों का मत है कि यह सरयू नदी कोशल-राज्य के पास से बहनेवाली सरयू है। पर बात ऐसी नहीं हो सकती। ऋग्वेद-कालीन भूगोल के जाननेवालों को यह बात भलीभाँति विदित है कि उस समय तक कोशल-राज्य का निर्माण नहीं हुआ था और वैदिक आर्यगण पंजाब से बहुत पूरब की ओर नहीं बढ़ पाये थे। विद्वानों का मत है कि यह सरयू अफगानिस्तान की एक नदी थी। किसी-किसी के मत से तक्षशिला के पास से बहनेवाली किसी नदी का नाम सरयू है। जेन्द-अवस्ता में इस नदी का नाम 'हरोयू' कहा गया है। पारसी लोग 'स' की जगह प्रायः 'ह' का उच्चारण किया करते हैं। सुदूर पश्चिमोत्तर प्रदेश के पास बहनेवाली 'हरीरुद' नदी को ही बहुतेरे विद्वान् अब 'अवस्ता' की 'हरोयू' तथा ऋग्वेद की 'सरयू' नदी समझने लगे हैं। बहुत सम्भव है, यह विचार ठीक हो।

उपर्युक्त बातों से यह भलीभाँति प्रकट हो जाता है कि ऋग्वैदिक-काल में आर्यगण पंजाब से बहुत दूर नहीं हटे थे; पंजाब के पूरब बहनेवाली नदियाँ गंगा-यमुना आदि का यशोविस्तार तबतक प्रायः न के बराबर था; तथा कुरु-पाञ्चाल, वत्स, कोशल, काशी और विदेह आदि जनपदों या देशों का निर्माण भी तब तक नहीं हो पाया था। ये सारे देश ऋग्वेदोक्त पूर्व समुद्र के गर्भ में अवस्थित थे। ज्यों-ज्यों पूर्व समुद्र सुदूर पूर्व की ओर हटता गया, त्यों-त्यों नयी मिट्टी निकलती गयी। इन जमीनों पर ज्यों-ज्यों नये-नये पेड़-पौधे उगते और पनपते गये; त्यों-त्यों आर्यगण पहले तो गोचारण के सिलसिले में इन जंगलों का उपयोग और उपभोग करने लगे; पश्चात् उनकी जनसंख्या ज्यों-ज्यों बढ़ती गयी, उन जंगलों को वे काट-काट कर, नयी-नयी बस्तियाँ––नये-नये देश बसाते गये।

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अब हम ब्राह्मण-युग में प्रवेश करते हैं। आर्यों की पूरब की ओर बढ़ने की सूचना सबसे पहले 'शतपथ ब्राह्मण' में हमें स्पष्ट रूप से मिलती है। 'शतपथ ब्राह्मण' (१।४।१०-१६) में लिखा है कि सरस्वती के तट पर विदेह मिथि नाम का राजा था। गोतम रहूगण उसका पुरोहित था। ये दोनों अग्नि वैश्वानर का अनुसरण करते हुए 'सदानीरा' नदी के तट तक पहुँचे। अग्नि वहाँ रुक गया और राजा विदेह मिथि 'सदानीरा' के उस पार यानी पूर्व पार जाकर रहने लगा। तब से उस देश का नाम विदेह अथवा मिथिला पड़ा। समयान्तर में यह विदेह देश दो भागों में विभक्त हो गया। एक पूर्व विदेह तथा दूसरा पश्चिम विदेह। पश्चिम विदेह को लोग वैशाली भी कहते हैं—जैसा कि आगे चल कर मालूम होगा।

'शतपथ' के मतानुसार यह 'सदानीरा' नदी कोशल और विदेह राष्ट्रों की सीमा है। इसके पूर्व पार में पहले ब्राह्मण लोग नहीं रहते थे, अथवा अगर रहते हों तो बहुत कम तायदाद में। आज भी हम लोगों को मालूम है कि जो ब्राह्मण सरयू के पूर्व पार में आ बसे, उनकी समाज में वह इज्जत नहीं, जो सरयू के पश्चिम पार में बसनेवाले ब्राह्मणों की है। सरयू नदी भी किसी काल में कोशल राज्य की पश्चिमीय सीमा थी। अस्तु, अब विचारणीय विषय यह है कि यह 'सदानीरा' नदी कहाँ थी और यदि आज वर्तमान है तो इसका मौजूदा रूप क्या है ?

यह बात प्रायः सभी पाठकों पर भलीभाँति विदित है कि नदियों की धाराएँ सदा बदलती रहती हैं। जल की प्रचुरता अथवा न्यूनता के कारण भी नदियों की धाराएँ क्रमशः फैलती और सिकुड़ती रहती हैं। जब समुद्र अथवा कोई बड़ी नदी अपना जल सिमट कर नीचे की ओर अथवा दूसरी दिशा में हटती है तो वह अपना अवशिष्ट जल ग्रहण करने के लिए भिन्न-भिन्न प्रकार के सोत-सरोवर आदि का प्रबन्ध कर लेती है। इसलिए अनुमान तो ऐसा किया जाता है कि ऋग्वेदोक्त पूर्व समुद्र ज्यों-ज्यों सुदूर पूर्व की ओर हटता गया, अपनी विरासत के रूप में गंगा, यमुना, सरयू, गंडक, कौशिकी आदि नदियों को पीछे की ओर छोड़ता गया। आज भी तो बंगोपसागर के मुहाने के पास गंगा की अनेक धाराएँ हैं, जिनका स्थानीय लोगों ने अपनी सुविधा के खयाल से जो कुछ भी नाम रख लिया हो, पर भूगोल में उनका कोई स्थान नहीं। जिस तरह से बंगोपसागर के मुहाने पर नित्य नयी मिट्टी जमती जाती है और आबादी बढ़ती जाती है उसी तरह क्या वे नदियाँ, जिनका जल सूखने से बच जायगा, अथवा जिनकी धारा अवकुंठित होने से बच जायगी, कालान्तर में वहाँ बड़ी नदियों का रूप नहीं धारण करेंगी जिनका प्रकाश अथवा प्रशस्ति सुदूर भविष्य में गंगा अथवा यमुना से किसी प्रकार भी कम नहीं होगी ?

रामायण और पौराणिक ग्रन्थों में सरयू को कोशल राज्य की पूर्वी सीमा कहा गया है; उसी प्रकार गंडक को विदेह की पश्चिमीय सीमा। शतपथ के मतानुसार 'सदानीरा' कोशल को विदेह से अलग करती है। इससे यह पता चलता है कि 'सदानीरा' या तो वर्तमान काल की सरयू हो अथवा गंडक। प्रसिद्ध जर्मन विद्वान डा० वेबर 'सदानीरा' को वर्तमान गंडक बतलाते हैं। डा० मजुमदार शास्त्री भी इसी पक्ष का समर्थन करते हैं।

वर्तमान काल में हम 'गंडक' नदी की दो धाराएँ पाते हैं। एक 'गंडक' वह है जो रक्सौल (चम्पारण), मुजफ्फरपुर, समस्तीपुर (दरभंगा) आदि स्थानों के पास से गुजरती हुई नवगछिया (मुँगेर) के पास गंगा से मिलती है। इसको लोग बूढ़ीगंडक या पुरानीगंडक कहते हैं। इसकी धारा में वह वेग नहीं—वह बल नहीं—जो दूसरी बड़ी नदियों में हम पाते हैं। यद्यपि इस नदी में सदा पानी रहता है, पर हम कह सकते हैं कि इसकी धारा एक प्रकार से मुर्दा है, उसमें वह जोश-खरोश नहीं जो किसी नगर अथवा स्थान का कतर-ब्योंत करे और उसकी जगह पर दूसरा नगर या स्थान बसा दे। दूसरी बात यह है कि 'कमला' और 'बाग्मती' की तरह यह नदी भी ज्यादातर मध्य मिथिला प्रान्त होकर ही गुजरती है। इसलिए वेबर साहब के मतानुसार यदि 'सदानीरा' वर्तमान 'गंडक' है तो वह 'पुरानी गंडक' या 'बूढ़ी गंडक' नहीं हो सकती; कारण 'शतपथ' के मतानुकूल 'सदानीरा' कोशल और विदेह राज्य की सीमा है, जो हकीकत हम पुरानी गंडक में नहीं पाते।

अब रही बात नयी गंडक की। इसे लोग 'शालिग्रामी' भी कहते हैं। 'नारायणी' नाम से भी यह बहुत जगहों पर विख्यात है। यह बगहा (चम्पारन) के कुछ दूर उत्तर हट कर विहार की सरहद को छूती है तथा चम्पारण और मुजफ्फरपुर जिलों को 'सारन' से पृथक् करती हुई हाजीपुर के पास गंगा से मिलती है। जिस समय रामचन्द्र विश्वामित्र के साथ बक्सर होते हुए जनकपुर जाते हैं, रास्ते में ऋषि ने अनेक नदियों का परिचय उन्हें दिया है। जहाँ गंगा, सोन और कौशिकी आदि नदियों का वर्णन प्रचुर मात्रा में हम 'वाल्मीकि' में पाते हैं, वहाँ 'गंडक' की चर्चा का बिलकुल अभाव है! यद्यपि विश्वामित्र हाजीपुर के पास ही गंगा से नाव पर वर्तमान 'रामचौड़ा' पर उतरते हैं, और पास में ही गंडक नदी गंगा से मिलती है, पर परम आश्चर्य यह है कि विश्वामित्र अथवा वाल्मीकि—दोनों में से किसी एक का भी ध्यान 'गंडक' की ओर नहीं जाता है। क्या इससे यह अनुमान हम कर सकते हैं कि तबतक सम्भवतः 'गंडक' का निर्माण नहीं हुआ था ?

बाद के पाली साहित्य में हम 'मही' नदी की चर्चा पाते हैं। कहीं-कहीं गंडक द्वारा वैशालिक बनिये श्रावस्ती नगर को व्यापार करने जाते थे—ऐसा भी पाठ हमें मिलता है। 'मही' को कहीं-कहीं पर 'सुखमही' और कहीं-कही पर 'मही-गंडक' भी कहते हैं। इसके अनेक सोत और धाराएँ आज भी सारन जिले में विराजमान हैं, जो काल-क्रम से सूखती और भरती हुई चली जाती हैं। जिस प्रकार 'पुरानी

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गंडक' के पश्चिम नून, कदाने और बाया, किसी जमाने में मुजफ्फरपुर जिले की प्रसिद्ध नदियों में थी, और आज भी उनकी रूप-रेखा थोड़े बहुत परिवर्तन के साथ ज्यों-की-त्यों मौजूद है, उसी प्रकार 'सरयू' नदी के पूर्व और नयी गंडक के पश्चिम सारन जिले में घघर, बौद्धा, मही और सुखमही आदि नदियाँ अपनी इस जीर्ण-शीर्ण अवस्था में भी अपने प्राचीन गौरव की स्मृति में साल में एक-दो महीने आँसू की धारा बहा लिया करती हैं ।

अस्तु, लेखक का यह अनुमान और विचार है कि ब्राह्मण काल की 'सदानीरा' आधुनिक 'सरयू' और पुरानी गंडक के बीच अवस्थित थी। यह कोई संकुचित नदी नहीं थी। इसकी जलराशि का विस्तार बहुत बड़ा था। इसका प्रसार अथवा फैलाव लगभग ७० या ८० मील से कम में नहीं था। इसका जल ज्यों-ज्यों सूखता गया, अथवा नीचे की ओर (गंगा में) धसता गया, त्यों-त्यों इन इलाकों में नयी-नयी नदियों का निर्माण होता गया और सूखी हुई जमीन के जंगलों को काट कर आर्य लोग अपनी-अपनी वस्ती बसाते गये। जहाँ वैदिक 'सदानीरा' ने एक ओर सरयू, मही, बौद्धा, शालिग्रामी (नयी गंडक), बाया, नून, कदाने और पुरानी गंडक का जन्म दिया, अथवा अपनी विरासत के रूप में इन नदियों को छोड़ गयी, वहाँ दूसरी ओर उसने एक विशाल भू-भाग को भी अपने गर्भ से बाहर किया, जो बाद में 'वैशाली' के नाम से संसार में विख्यात हुआ। वैशालिक, वृज्जिक, मल्लक अथवा मद्रक जातियाँ इसी भू-भाग की रहने वाली थीं। जहाँ विदेह (पूर्व विदेह) और कोशल का निर्माण वैदिक युग—ब्राह्मणयुग—में हो गया था, वहाँ वैशाली का संस्थापन रामायण-काल में या उससे कुछ ही दिन पहले हुआ था। इसका एकमात्र कारण यही था कि वैशाली तबतक 'सदानीरा' के गर्भ से प्रकट नहीं हुई थी।

वैशालिकों की सभ्यता वैदिक सभ्यता थी। उनके सभी संस्कार वैदिक थे। इसका एकमात्र कारण यह था कि वैशाली के पूरब और पश्चिम विदेह और कोशल—दोनों अपने समय में वैदिक सभ्यता के प्रधान केन्द्र थे। और सच तो यह है कि जिस प्रकार कोशल और विदेहवाले इक्ष्वाकु वंशीय क्षत्रिय थे, वैशालिक भी उसी वंश के क्षत्रिय थे। और इक्ष्वाकुवंशीय क्षत्रिय लोग वैदिक सभ्यता के अनन्य भक्त और प्रतिपालक थे। वे शूर थे, वे वीर थे, वे साहसी थे, वे सुन्दर थे और सब प्रकार देश, समाज, प्रजा और परिवार के प्रतिपालक थे। अतिथि-सत्कार में तो वे ला-मिसाल थे, जैसा कि बाद के साहित्य से भी प्रकट होता है। बौद्ध-युग में भी उनके संस्कार में कोई विशेष विकार नहीं उत्पन्न हो पाया था, कारण इसका यह अनुमान किया जाता है कि उनकी सम्बन्ध-परम्परा काशी, कोशल, विदेह आदि के वंशजों के साथ अक्षुण्ण बनी रही।

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प्रजातन्त्री वैशाली

प्रो० सूरजदेव नारायण, एम० ए०, बी० एल० , प्रो० हरिरंजन घोषाल, एम० ए०, बी० एल०, डी० लिट्०

प्राचीन लिच्छवियों की शासन-प्रणाली पर विचार करना बिलकुल पिष्टपेषण नहीं होगा, यद्यपि इस विषय पर विद्वानों का ध्यान बहुत दिनों से आकृष्ट रहा है। यह निर्विवाद रूप से ऐतिहासिक सत्य है कि बुद्ध के समय वैशाली का प्रजातन्त्र वज्जि-संघ के आठ सदस्यों में से था। किन्तु अभी तक इस प्रजातन्त्र के उद्गम अथवा इसकी स्थापना के कारण पर स्पष्ट रूप से विचार करने का प्रयत्न नहीं हुआ है। पुराणों तथा कतिपय अन्य ग्रन्थों के आधार पर यह कहा जा सकता है कि ब्राह्मणयुग में मिथिला और वैशाली दोनों में राजतन्त्र-शासन[1] कायम था। वैशालिकवंश का संस्थापक विशाल रामायण[2] द्वारा इक्ष्वाकु का पुत्र और पुराणों द्वारा नाभाग का वंशज माना गया है। विष्णुपुराण में नाभाग[3] से लेकर ३४ राजाओं की वंशावली दी गयी है। सुमति, जिस राजा का नाम सबसे पीछे है, विशाल की दसवीं पीढ़ी में दिखलाया गया है और यदि रामायण के प्रमाण पर विश्वास किया जाय तो वह अयोध्या[4] के राजा दशरथ का समकालीन था। श्रीपार्जिटर इक्ष्वाकु के साथ विशाल का सम्बन्ध अस्वीकार करने के पक्ष में हैं, किन्तु उनका कहना है कि वैशालिक राजाओं की सूचियाँ जो कई ग्रन्थों में उपलब्ध हैं, करीब-करीब मिलती-जुलती हैं[5]। सुमति के बाद पुराणों अथवा महाकाव्यों में वंशावली-क्रम नहीं मिलता और बुद्ध-युग के पहले तक वैशाली का इतिहास बिलकुल अन्धकारपूर्ण है।

कब और किस प्रकार वैशाली ने गणतन्त्र को अपनाया ? डा० एच० सी० रायचौधरी ने मिथिला[6] में राजतन्त्र से प्रजातन्त्र में परिवर्तन होने का कारण बतलाया है। किन्तु वैशाली में इस प्रकार के किसी परिवर्तन के सम्बन्ध में हमें कुछ मालूम नहीं है। फिर भी इतना तो सच ही है कि लिच्छवि-प्रजातन्त्र का जन्म बुद्ध के बहुत पहले हो चुका था। बुद्ध ने स्वयं वज्जियों की बहुत पहले से आती हुई प्राचीन संस्थाओं[7] की प्रशंसा खुले शब्दों में की है। यह भी सम्भव है कि महाभारत-युद्ध के समय में लिच्छवि-गण का अस्तित्व रहा हो। जब भीष्म गणों के नाश के सामान्य कारणों का वर्णन करते हैं और उनकी समृद्धि एवं जीवित रहने का कारण उनके संघ-जीवन की अविच्छिन्न परम्परा बतलाते हैं[8] तब उनकी दृष्टि में अवश्य ही लिच्छवि और वज्जि-संघ की अन्य जातियाँ हैं[9]। इससे यह परिणाम निकाला जा सकता है कि वैशाली-गण की स्थापना वैशाली के राजा सुमति का आतिथ्य स्वीकार करनेवाले[10] रामायण के नायक राम और महाभारत--युद्ध के बीच के समय में हुई। रामायण की

[1] देखिये डा० एच० सी० राय चौधरी का पोलिटिकल हिस्टरी ऑव ऐंशियण्ट इण्डिया, पृ० ७५।

[2] पार्जिटर, ऐंशियण्ट इण्डियन हिस्टॉरिकल ट्रेडिशन, पृ० ५७।

[3] देखिये श्यामनारायणसिंह का हिस्टरी ऑव तिरहुत, पृ० २१ और बी० रंगाचार्य, प्री-मुसलमान इण्डिया, पृ० ४२४-३२।

[4] पार्जिटर, उल्लिखित, पृ० ९७। [5] वही।

[6] एच० सी० राय चौधरी, उल्लिखित, पृ० ५२-५३।

[7] देखिये के० पी० जायसवाल, हिन्दू पॉलिटी, पृ० ४८। वैशाली में बुद्ध के आगमन के लिए देखिये, राधाकुमुद मुकर्जी, मेन ऐण्ड थॉट इन ऐंशियण्ट इण्डिया, पृ० ६२-६३।

[8] देखिये जर्नल ऑव बिहार ऐण्ड उड़ीसा रिसर्च सोसाइटी, सितम्बर १९१५, पृ० १७६-१७७।

[9] डा० बेनीप्रसाद का अनुमान है कि भीष्म ने जिन गणों का उल्लेख किया है वे ऐसे प्रजातन्त्र थे जो "मुख्यतः हिमालय की तराई में कुछ समय के लिए फले-फूले थे।"--(द थ्योरी ऑव गवर्नमेण्ट इन ऐंशियण्ट इण्डिया, पृ० ६६)। किन्तु ऐसा अनुमान करने का कोई कारण नहीं है कि ये प्रजातन्त्र कुछ ही समय के लिए फले-फूले; प्रत्युत् भीष्म ने अपने समय के प्रजातन्त्रों के सम्बन्ध में संघ स्थापित करने और प्रजातन्त्र की अन्य स्वाभाविक विशेषताओं का जो उल्लेख किया है, उससे यह अनुमान किया जा सकता है कि उनका मतलब अन्य प्रजातन्त्रों के साथ-साथ लिच्छविगण से भी है।

[10] एस० एन० सिंह, हिस्टरी ऑव तिरहुत, पृष्ठ २४।

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रचना की तिथि जो कुछ भी रही हो, इसमें कोई सन्देह नहीं कि इसमें चित्रित ऐतिहासिक घटनाएँ महाभारत युद्ध से बहुत पहले घटित हुई थीं। राम के पुत्र कुश के बाद से बृहद्बल तक, जो उस वंश का अन्तिम राजा था। और महाभारत-युद्ध में अभिमन्यु द्वारा मारा गया, अठाईस राजाओं की सूची पुराणों में मिलती है[1]। उस युद्ध की निश्चित तिथि का ढूँढ़ निकालना किसी प्रकार भी आसान नहीं है। किन्तु महाकाव्यों एवं पुराणों के प्रमाणों के आधार पर डा० हेमचन्द्र रायचौधरी का विचार है कि अभिमन्यु के पुत्र परीक्षित का राज्याभिषेक करीब चौदहवीं सदी, ई० पू० के मध्य हुआ था[2]। यदि ऐसी बात हो, तो बुद्ध के कई शताब्दी-पूर्व वैशाली-प्रजातन्त्र का अस्तित्व मानना पड़ेगा।

इस बात के जानने का हमारे पास कोई पुष्ट प्रमाण नहीं कि वैशाली में किस प्रकार राजतन्त्र के पश्चात् प्रजातन्त्र का आगमन हुआ। क्या सुमति वैशालिक-वंश का अन्तिम राजा था? केवल इस बात से कि वंशावली के नाम वहीं पर आकर रुक जाते हैं, ऐसा परिणाम नहीं निकाला जा सकता। फिर भी एक बात स्पष्ट है जिससे कुछ अनुमान लगाया जा सकता है। जातक के अनुसार लिच्छवि-शासन के अधिकारी जो ७७०७ पुरुष थे वे अपने को 'राजूनम्'[3] कहते थे। शायद वे इसलिए ऐसा कहे जाते रहे हों कि किसी प्राचीन राजवंश से वे प्रादुर्भूत हुए हों। किन्तु हम 'राजूनम्' शब्द को उतना महत्त्व नहीं देते जितना इस बात को कि वैशाली के ७७०७ शासक राजकुलोद्भव कुमारों जैसा बर्ताव करते थे। भद्दसाल जातक में वैशाली की उस पुष्करिणी का उल्लेख है जहाँ से राजाओं के अभिषेक के लिए जल मँगवाया जाता था[4]। इस पुष्करिणी के जल की भलीभाँति रक्षा की जाती थी और जो राजकुल का नहीं था, वह उसके जल को भ्रष्ट नहीं कर सकता था। कथा है कि एक बार कोसल के सेनापति ने अपनी स्त्री को इससें स्नान कराया था, जिस लिए पाँच सौ क्रुद्ध लिच्छवि-राजाओं ने उसका बुरी तरह पीछा किया था[5]। ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि वैशाली-प्रजातन्त्र की स्थापना किसी क्रान्ति अथवा युद्ध के पश्चात् जिसके फलस्वरूप राजतन्त्र का अन्त हुआ हो, नहीं हुई थी। यह सच है कि यहाँ प्रजातन्त्र के पूर्व राजतन्त्र प्रचलित था। यहाँ का प्रजातन्त्र क्रमिक विकास का परिणाम प्रतीत होता है। राजा के ज्येष्ठ पुत्रों के साथ अधिकारों का उपयोग करने के कारण राजा के छोटे राजकुमारों द्वारा यह परिवर्तन लाया गया मालूम पड़ता है। प्रारम्भ में एकतन्त्र राजा की मृत्यु के पश्चात् उसके सभी पुत्रों को राज्याधिकार मिला होगा और इस प्रथा के चलते रहने के फलस्वरूप राज करनेवाले कुमारों की संख्या क्रमशः बढ़ती गयी होगी, यहाँ तक कि उनकी संख्या ७७०७ पहुँच गयी। सम्भवतः जिस जातक ने इस संख्या का उल्लेख किया है उसकी रचना के समय लिच्छवि-शासकों की यही संख्या रही हो। यह संख्या लिच्छवि-शासन-विधान द्वारा निश्चित संख्या नहीं मानी जा सकती।

राजतन्त्र से प्रजातन्त्र में परिवर्तित होने का एक दूसरा कारण लिच्छवियों की बढ़ती हुई व्यापारिक समृद्धि के फलस्वरूप वैशाली के कुछ लोगों के पास अर्थसंचय हो सकता है। मार्कण्डेयपुराण में लिखा है कि राजा नाभाग ने एक वैश्य-कन्या से विवाह किया था, जिससे उनके वंशज वैश्य हो गये, किन्तु विदेह के राजा क्षत्रिय ही रहे[6]। इससे यह पता चल सकता है कि वैशाली अतिप्राचीनकाल से ही व्यापार के लिए प्रसिद्ध थी। राज-परिवारों के सदस्यों के वैश्य होने के कारण यह असम्भव नहीं कि राजाओं के छोटे लड़के व्यापार में सक्रिय भाग लेते रहे हों। अर्थसंचय एवं राजकुलोद्भव होने की भावना होने से क्रमशः उसके मन में शासन-कार्य में सक्रिय भाग लेने की इच्छा उत्पन्न हुई होगी और इस प्रकार राजतन्त्र का अन्त कर प्रजातन्त्र की स्थापना हुई होगी[7]।

लिच्छविगण का चाहे जो भी उद्‌गम रहा हो, इसमें सन्देह नहीं कि इसमें खास लोग ही भाग ले सकते थे, सब नहीं। आबादी के एक भाग में ही राज्याधिकार सीमित था जिसकी संख्या एक समय ७७०७ थी। ये शासक राजधानी के रहनेवाले थे और उपराजा, सेनापति एवं भाण्डागारिक जैसे राजपुरुषों द्वारा शासन करते थे। जातक में लिखा है कि ऐसे राजपुरुषों की संख्या राजाओं की संख्या के बराबर थी। ऐसा मालूम पड़ता है कि शासकवर्ग के हर सदस्य का अधिकार-क्षेत्र किसी खास इलाके में पड़ता था और इस प्रकार के बहुत ही इलाके

[1] देखिये वी० रंगाचार्य, उल्लिखित, पृष्ठ ३६४-३६५।

[2] हेमचन्द्ररायचौधरी, उल्लिखित, पृष्ठ १६।

[3] देखिये के० पी० जायसवाल, उल्लिखित, पृष्ठ ५१।

[4] देखिये आर० सी० मजूमदार, कॉरपोरेट लाइफ इन ऐंशियंट इण्डिया, पृष्ठ २२७।

[5] वही।

[6] देखिये एस० एन० सिंह, उल्लिखित, पृ० २२ (पादटिप्पणी)।

[7] यह जानने की बात है कि कौटिल्य ने दो प्रकार के संघों का वर्णन किया है—(१) राजशब्दोपजीवी अर्थात् वे जिनके शासक राजा की उपाधि धारण करते थे, (२) आयुधजीवी या वार्ताशस्त्रोपजीवी जिन्हें डा० के० पी० जायसवाल "Nation-in-Arms republics" कहते हैं। यह असम्भव नहीं कि प्रथम वर्ग के संघ साधारणतः हमारे उपरिलिखित ढंग से बन गये हों।

[8] देखिये आर० सी० मजूमदार, उल्लिखित, पृ० २२७।

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या विभाग थे, क्योंकि लिच्छविगण में केवल वैशाली का नगर ही नहीं सम्मिलित था, इसमें बाहर के विस्तृत राज्य भी शामिल थे[1]। हर इलाके का शासन उपराजा या प्रतिनिधि के हाथ में था। यह सम्भव नहीं मालूम पड़ता कि समस्त राज्य से सम्बन्ध रखनेवाली बातों का निर्णय सर्वदा कई हजार शासकों द्वारा ही होता था। विशेष महत्त्वपूर्ण बातों के लिए ये सभी शासक बहुधा संस्थागार या सार्वजनिक भवन में मिलते थे[2]। दैनिक शासनकार्य के लिए एक कार्यकारिणी समिति थी, ऐसा प्रतीत होता है। जैनकल्प-सूत्र में उल्लिखित 'नव-गण-रयनो' सम्भवतः लिच्छविगण के नौ कार्यकारक (एग्जिक्यूटिव) अफसर थे, जैसा कि डा० रमेशचन्द्र मजूमदार का अनुमान है[3] और सम्भवतः इन्हीं से कार्यकारिणी समिति का निर्माण होता था।

लिच्छवियों की न्याय-प्रणाली के सम्बन्ध में भी हम एक बात कह देना चाहते हैं। जैसा डाक्टर का० प्र० जायसवाल ने कहा है, वैशाली में बहुत से छोटे बड़े न्यायालय थे। विभिन्न प्रकार के राजपुरुष इनके सभापति होते थे[4]। न्याय-प्रणाली की एक खास विशेषता यह थी कि अभियुक्त को तभी दण्ड मिलता था जब वह क्रमशः सात न्याय-समितियों से एक स्वर से अपराधी करार दिया जाय। इनमें से किसी एक के द्वारा वह छोड़ दिया जा सकता था[5]। इस प्रकार व्यक्ति की स्वतन्त्रता की रक्षा इस ढंग से की जाती थी जिसकी उपमा सम्भवतः संसार के इतिहास में नहीं है।[6]

लिच्छविगण का एक बड़ा बल था वज्जि-संघ के अन्य सदस्यों से संयुक्त रहना। जैसा कि भीष्म ने कहा था, "गणों को यदि जीवित रहना है तो उन्हें सर्वदा संघ-प्रणाली का अवलम्बन करना चाहिए"।[7] कौटिल्य ने अपने अर्थशास्त्र में भी इस पर बहुत जोर दिया है।[8] प्राचीन भारतीय शासकों ने संघ की उपयोगिता अच्छी तरह समझी थी। उनका विश्वास था कि "संघ-सेना के बल से" भौतिक समृद्धि प्राप्त की जा सकती थी। महाभारत में इस बात का प्रमाण मिलता है जिससे सिद्ध होता है कि बाहरी राज्य भी संघ-राज्यों से सन्धि के इच्छुक रहते थे।[9] इस प्रकार मल्लों और लिच्छवियों से संघ कायम किया गया था। इस पर विश्वास करने का कारण है कि यह संघ महावीर की मृत्यु के समय था।[10] इस संघ की वास्तविक प्रकृति को ढूँढ़ निकालना मुश्किल है। यह एक प्रकार की सन्धि थी अथवा आज-कल के अर्थ में फेडरेशन था, यह कहना कठिन है। लेकिन आजकल के ही समान संघ-समिति में क्षेत्रफल अथवा जनसंख्या का कुछ भी विचार न करके संघ-बद्ध राज्यों की समानता अच्छी तरह बरती जाती थी। यह इस बात से स्पष्ट है कि संघ कौंसिल में नौ लिच्छवियों से और नौ मल्लों से कुल अठारह सदस्य थे।[11] डा० जायसवाल का विचार है कि कोसल के राजा के साथ भी इस संयुक्त कौंसिल का किसी प्रकार का राजनीतिक समझौता या मेल था।[12] इस बात पर आश्चर्य करने का कोई कारण नहीं, क्योंकि मगध कोसल और लिच्छवियों का समान रूप से शत्रु था।

यहाँ प्राचीन भारतीय प्रजातन्त्रों के, विशेष कर लिच्छवियों के, शासनकार्य पर एक दृष्टि डाल लेना अच्छा होगा। गणों की साधारण-सभा में समानता का सिद्धान्त बरता जाता था। अर्थ पर पूरा ध्यान दिया जाता था। युद्ध-कला उतनी ही महत्त्वपूर्ण मानी जाती थी, जितनी शान्ति-कला। लिच्छवियों की शिक्षा और प्रतिभा एकाङ्गी न थी। राजनीतिक उन्नति उतने ही गहरे विचार का विषय थी जितनी जनता की आर्थिक उन्नति। डा० जायसवाल के शब्दों में, अधिकारों के विभाग एवं न्याय-प्रणाली से यही सूचित होता है कि उस समय तक लोगों ने गणों का कार्य-संचालन करने का बहुत अधिक अनुभव प्राप्त कर लिया था और उनमें इस कार्य के लिए बहुत उच्च कोटि की समझदारी आ गयी थी[13]।

[1] वज्जिदेश की सीमा के लिए देखिये जर्नल ऑव बिहार ऐण्ड उड़ीसा रिसर्च सोसाइटी, भाग ६, १९२०, पृ० २५९-२६२। वैशाली-राज्य की सीमा पर कनिंगहम का मत जानने के लिए देखिये ऐंशियण्ट ज्यॉग्रफी ऑव इण्डिया, पृ० ५०८-९।

[2] के० पी० जायसवाल, उल्लिखित, पृ० ५२।

[3] आर० सी० मजूमदार, उल्लिखित, पृ० २३२।

[4] के० पी० जायसवाल उल्लिखित, पृ० ५२-५३।

[5] आर० सी० मजूमदार, उल्लिखित, पृ० २३३। [6] वही।

[7] जर्नल ऑव बिहार ऐण्ड उड़ीसा रिसर्च सोसाइटी, सितम्बर, १९१५, पृ० १७७।

[8] अर्थशास्त्र, पृ० ३७६।

[9] जर्नल ऑव बिहार ऐण्ड उड़ीसा रिसर्च सोसाइटी, सितम्बर १९१५, पृ० १७७।

[10] के० पी० जायसवाल, उल्लिखित, पृ० ५४। [11] वही। [12] वही।

[13] डा० बी० सी० लॉ का विचार है कि "बौद्धसंघ का संगठन करने में बुद्ध ने उत्तरपूर्वी भारत के, विशेष कर लिच्छवियों के राजनीतिक संघ को अपना आदर्श माना था" (चुनीलाल आनन्द के 'ऐन इण्ट्रोडक्शन टु द हिस्ट्री ऑव गवर्नमेण्ट इन इण्डिया' पृ० ७१ पर उद्धृत)। डा० काशीप्रसाद जायसवाल की भी यही राय है (हिन्दू-राज्य-तन्त्र, पहला खण्ड, पृ० ६८)।

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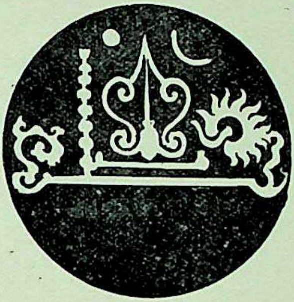
शासन-प्रणाली की सफलता की सबसे अच्छी कसौटी यह है कि उसके द्वारा राज्य चिरस्थायी हो। भारत की प्रजातन्त्र या गण-शासन-प्रणाली—उदाहरणार्थ लिच्छविगण की शासन-प्रणाली—राज्यों को चिरस्थायी बनाने में बहुत अधिक सफल प्रमाणित हुई थी।[1] लिच्छवि शिशुनाग एवं मौर्य-साम्राज्यों के बाद भी बच रहे थे। उन्होंने गुप्त-साम्राज्य के निर्माण में भी सहायता दी। उनके सम्बन्ध के लेख भी बहुत समय तक के मिलते हैं। इससे सिद्ध होता है कि उनका प्रजातन्त्र स्थायित्व की कसौटी पर पूरा उतरा था।



[1] डा० जायसवाल, हिन्दू-राज्य-तन्त्र, पहला खण्ड, पृ० २८६।

Digitization by Arya Samaj Charitable Foundation, Chennai

अम्बपाली : एक दृश्य[1]

श्रीरामवृक्ष बेनीपुरी

अम्बपाली का बसन्तोद्यान––सन्ध्या का समय––

बगीचे के बँगले के बरामदे से सटा एक ऊँचा मंच––मंच पर सजी-सजाई फर्श––उस पर बैठी अम्बपाली आईना सामने रखे शृंगार कर रही है––

मंच के आगे उद्यान का जो हिस्सा है, उसमें बेला, मोतिया, जूही आदि की पंक्तियाँ कलियों से लदीं––बीच में एक छोटा-सा नकली हौज जिसमें पालतू हंस का जोड़ा तैर रहा––

अम्बपाली की बगल में चयनिका खड़ी है––चयनिका कभी आसमान को देखती है, कभी अम्बपाली के चेहरे को––वह आश्चर्य और विषाद की पुतली बनी हुई है––अम्बपाली के चेहरे को पढ़ना उसके लिए मुश्किल हो रहा है––वह ठीक सन्ध्या का प्रतिरूप है, जिसमें दिन-रात, हर्ष-विषाद का निर्णय करना कठिन हो रहा––

चयनिका की ओर देखकर अम्बपाली मुस्कुराती है––फिर उससे पूछती है––

अम्बपाली––चुन्नी, देख तो, यह मेरा शृंगार कैसा उतरा ?

चयनिका––(नहीं बोलती है, सिर नीचा कर लेती है)

अम्बपाली––बोल-बोल, शृंगार कैसा उतरा ?

चयनिका––(फिर भी चुप है, सिर और नीचा कर लेती है)

अम्बपाली––(प्यार-भरे गुस्से में) नहीं बोलती ? तुझे बताना होगा चयनिके, कि आज का मेरा शृंगार कैसा उतरा ?

चयनिका––मैं कुछ नहीं समझ पाती, भद्रे !

अम्बपाली––तू कुछ नहीं समझ पाती और न समझ सकेगी । अम्बपाली की बातें समझ जाना आसान भी तो नहीं है, चुन्नी !

चयनिका––हाँ, आर्ये !

अम्बपाली––तू यही न सोच रही है कि कहाँ आज सारी वैशाली में मातम है, रुदन है, हाहाकार है, और कहाँ मेरा यह शृङ्गार, यह प्रसाधन, यह उल्लास, यह हास !––क्यों ?

चयनिका––हाँ, आर्ये !

अम्बपाली––लेकिन सोच, वैशाली में यह मातम क्यों है ? क्योंकि वह हार चुकी है । हारा आदमी अगर मातम न मनाये, गम में पड़ा आदमी न रोये, तो उसकी छाती फट जाय, धुकधुकी बन्द हो जाय, वह मर जाय । वैशाली मरना नहीं चाहती है, इसलिए मातम मनाती है । लेकिन. . . . (वह चुप हो जाती है)

चयनिका––'लेकिन' क्या भद्रे ? (उसकी आँखों में भय की छाया)

अम्बपाली––तूने सुना है, जब स्त्रियाँ सती होने जाती हैं, तब शृङ्गार कर लेती हैं । जिसने चिता से लिपटना तय कर लिया, वह अन्तिम साज-सज्जा से अपने को क्यों वंचित रखे ? जब घरवाले छाती पीटते होते हैं, वह हँसती है, मुस्कुराती है, शृङ्गार करती है । लेकिन घरवाले रो-पीटकर भी श्मशान से जिन्दा लौटते हैं, वह हँसकर भी अपने को ज्योति में विलीन कर देती है !

चयनिका––भद्रे, भद्रे, यह आप क्या कह रही हैं ? (उसकी आँखें छलछला उठती हैं)

अम्बपाली––बहुत ही सही कह रही हूँ । अम्बपाली ने किसी एक व्यक्ति पर नहीं, वैशाली पर अपने को उत्सर्ग किया था । आज जीती-जागती वैशाली मुर्दा लाश-सी पड़ी है । इसे कोई नहीं बचा सका । अब अम्बपाली ने तय किया है, या तो इस लाश में वह जान फूँकेगी, या इसीके साथ जल मरेगी !

चयनिका––आर्ये ! आर्ये ! (तलहथी से मुँह ढककर रोने लगती है)

[1] लेखक के 'अम्बपाली' नामक नाटक का एक अंश ।

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अम्बपाली--कातर मत बन, चयनिके ! अपने को अम्बपाली की योग्य अनुचरी सिद्ध कर ! देख, मेरा शृङ्गार अच्छा बना कि नहीं ? इच्छा होती है, जितने भी शृङ्गार और प्रसाधन के सामान हैं, सब आज लाद लूँ, ओढ़ लूँ ! (कुछ रुककर) जल्दी कर, मगधराज अजातशत्रु अभी यहाँ पधारनेवाले हैं।

चयनिका--मगधराज ! अजातशत्रु !

अम्बपाली--हाँ। महामात्य ने कहा था, जो डरता है, उसके नजदीक सबसे पहले भूत आता है ! वैशाली में पहली मेहरबानी उनकी मुझी पर हुई है। उन्होंने खबर भेजी है, आज अकेले-अकेले यहाँ पधारेंगे ! मगधपति का स्वागत भी तो साधारण साज-सज्जा से नहीं होना चाहिए। वह भी तो देख लें कि इस अलौकिक नगरी की राजनर्तकी कैसी है ?

चयनिका--(कुछ घृणा, कुछ क्रोध से) मगधपति के स्वागत के लिए ?......भद्रे......

अम्बपाली--(हँसकर) रुकती क्यों है, बोल। आज का सब कहा-सुना माफ !

चयनिका--(चुपचाप अम्बपाली का चेहरा घूर रही है)

अम्बपाली--हाँ रे, मगधपति के स्वागत के लिए ! राजनर्तकी अपने स्वागत से किसी आगत को कैसे वंचित कर सकती है ? हाँ, स्वागत-स्वागत में फर्क है। दीपशिखा भी तो पतंग का स्वागत करती है। और उसके स्वागत के दो ही नतीजे होते हैं--या तो पतंग जलेगा, या दीपक बुझेगा। जिस दीपक ने बुझना तय कर लिया उसकी शिखा जितनी भी तेज रहे, उतना ही अच्छा !

चयनिका--(भर्राई आवाज में) फिर यह क्या कह रही हैं, भद्रे ?

अम्बपाली--चयनिके, अम्बपाली तय कर चुकी है, जिसे वैशाली नहीं हरा सकी, उसे अम्बपाली हरायगी। हरायगी, या देख (अँगूठी दिखाती है) इस अमृत को चूसकर अमर बन जायगी। जो पताका हमारे वीरों ने रणभूमि में गिरा दी, आज अजातशत्रु देखेगा, इस मेरी रंगभूमि में वह कितनी ऊँची फहराती है !

चयनिका--यह अजीब द्वन्द्वमयी बातें हैं, आर्ये !

अम्बपाली--द्वन्द्वात्मक परिस्थिति में बातें भी द्वन्द्वात्मक ही हो सकती हैं। हम हराये जा चुके हैं, तो भी विजय की आकांक्षा रखते हैं। हम गिराये जा चुके हैं, तो भी उठने का अरमान हमसे हटा नहीं--इस मनहूस सन्ध्या में हम सुनहली भोर का सपना देख रहे हैं ! इस द्वन्द्वमयी परिस्थिति में सीधी-सादी बातें क्या हो सकती हैं, पगली !

वह हाथ बढ़ाकर चयनिका की उँगली पकड़ती और उसे खींचकर ठुड्डी पकड़ चुमकारती है, उसके मस्तक पर चुम्बन देती है--

धुँधलका हो रहा है--एक परिचारिका वहाँ आकर दीप जला जाती है--एक ऊँचे चिरागदान पर कितनी ही दीप-शिखाएँ जगमगा उठती हैं--उसके प्रकाश में अम्बपाली का सौन्दर्य और चमक उठता है--

दूसरी परिचारिका इसी समय एक अँगूठी लाकर अम्बपाली को देती है--अँगूठी पर वह नाम पढ़ती है और कहती है, "जा उन्हें बुला ला !"--

अजातशत्रु आता है--साधारण नागरिक-सा है वेश उसका--अम्बपाली आगे बढ़कर स्वागत करती और मंच पर बिठलाती है--

"चयनिके ! तू भी चली जा, यहाँ कोई न आवे"--कहकर बड़ी ही गम्भीर मुद्रा में अजातशत्रु से पूछती है--

अम्बपाली--मगधपति की आज्ञा !

अजातशत्रु--मगधपति मत कहो, राजनर्तकी ! मैं मगधपति की हैसियत से यहाँ नहीं आया। मगधपति इस वेश-भूषा में नहीं आया करते।

अम्बपाली--क्षमा करें, मुझसे गलती हुई। मगधपति तो धनुष के टंकार और तलवारों की झंकार के साथ आया करते हैं।

अजातशत्रु--मगध को अपने धनुष और तलवार पर कम नाज नहीं है, राजनर्तकी ! तुम्हारे व्यंग्य में भी सचाई है !

अम्बपाली--सिर्फ एक बात कहना मैं भूल गई थी; क्षमा कीजिए तो निवेदन करूँ।

अजातशत्रु--तुम्हारे लिए हमेशा क्षमा है !

अम्बपाली--क्योंकि मैं नारी हूँ और सुन्दरी भी ?

अजातशत्रु--तुम सुन्दरी हो, इसमें भी सचाई है।

अम्बपाली--(ताने के स्वर में) और इसमें भी सचाई है कि मगध को धनुष और तलवार के साथ ही अपने महामन्त्री वस्सकार पर भी कम नाज नहीं।

अजातशत्रु--(मुस्कुराते हुए) तुम वस्सकार पर नाराज हो लो, राजनर्तकी, लेकिन मन्त्री वही है, जो विजय का पथ प्रशस्त करे।

अम्बपाली--चाहे वह जिस घृणित उपाय से हो ?

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अजातशत्रु--विजय का पथ हमेशा ही कीचड़ से भरा और रक्त से सना होता है। जो गन्दगी और खून से डरे, उसे सिर से मुकुट उतारकर हाथ में भिक्षापात्र लेना चाहिए।

अम्बपाली--(जैसे निशाना लेकर) भगवान् बुद्ध ने मगधपति को यही शिक्षा दी थी! क्यों?

अजातशत्रु--भगवान् ने कुछ दूसरी ही शिक्षा दी थी। (मुस्कुराते हुए) किन्तु, एक नन्ही-सी चीज ने सब बंटाढार कर दिया, राजनर्तकी! देखोगी वह चीज?

अम्बपाली--कैसी चीज?

अजातशत्रु--(हाथी-दाँत पर बनी अम्बपाली की तस्वीर निकालकर उसके हाथ में देते हुए) यही है वह चीज!

अम्बपाली--(आश्चर्यचकित) एँ, यह मैं? मेरी....

अजातशत्रु--हाँ, तुम्हारी इस छोटी-सी तस्वीर ने ही फिर एक बार पीला कपड़ा उतार फेंकने को लाचार किया, एक बार फिर गंगाजल के धोये हाथों को खून से धोने को बाध्य किया!

अम्बपाली--(भौंचक बनी) मगधपति!

अजातशत्रु--राजनर्तकी, मगधपति ने जिन्दगी के इतने चढ़ाव-उतार देखे हैं कि उसने तय कर दिया था--शेष जीवन वह गृद्ध्रकूट पर ध्यान लगाते राजगृह में बिता डालेगा; या राजपाट की झंझटों को दूर फेंक बोधिवृक्ष की छाया में शान्ति-सुख प्राप्त करते सदा के लिए आँख मूँद लेगा। किन्तु, उसके सारे मंसूबे हवा हो गये--उसे छल की शरण लेनी पड़ी, बल का प्रयोग करना पड़ा। किसके चलते? क्यों? इसी छोटी-सी तस्वीर ने....(मुस्कुराता है)

अम्बपाली--तो आप राज्य के लिए वैशाली नहीं आये, सौन्दर्य के लिए वैशाली आये हैं।

अजातशत्रु--तुमने बिलकुल ठीक कहा।

अम्बपाली--सौन्दर्य, जो राज्य से भी क्षणिक है!

अजातशत्रु--सौन्दर्य, जो राज्य से भी अधिक प्रलोभक, मोहक और आकर्षक है। हर दिव्य वस्तु क्षणिक होती है, राजनर्तकी! फूल की मुस्कान, चपला की चमक, इन्द्रधनु की रंगीनियाँ और ओस की चमचमाहट--सब क्षणिक हैं! क्षणिकता दिव्यता की अनुचरी ही नहीं, सहचरी है!

अम्बपाली--और, मानवता की महत्ता इसी में है कि क्षणिक के पीछे दौड़ा जाय?

अजातशत्रु--क्षणिक के पीछे नहीं, दिव्य के पीछे। हर अच्छी चीज के पीछे उसका बुरा पहलू होता है, राजनर्तकी। जन्म के पीछे मरण है, उल्लास के पीछे विषाद, उत्सव के पीछे मातम। लेकिन, इसका मतलब यह नहीं कि जिन्दगी और जशन--जीवन और उत्सव--को भूलकर हम हमेशा शोक-सागर में गोते लगाते रहें--मातम मनाते रहें!

अम्बपाली--(घृणायुक्त व्यंग्य में) और इस जिन्दगी और जशन के लिए हजारों आदमियों का खून बहायें, हजारों माताओं को निपूती बनायें, हजारों युवतियों का सुहाग-सिन्दूर धोयें और हजारों मासूम बच्चों की जिन्दगी को आँसुओं में डुबोयें!

अजातशत्रु--हाँ, हाँ। राजनर्तकी, इन भावुकता की बातों से तुम अजातशत्रु के दिल को दहला नहीं सकती--बल्कि ऐसा करके तुम उसके दिल में सोई उस राक्षसी को कुरेदकर जगाती हो, जिसे वह मुश्किल से सुला पाता है!

वह अचानक उठकर खड़ा हो जाता है--इधर-उधर टहलने लगता है--आसमान की ओर बार-बार देखता है--अम्बपाली कुछ देर तक उसकी भावभंगी देखती है--फिर नजदीक जाकर कहती है--

अम्बपाली--मगधपति, आसन ग्रहण करें।

अजातशत्रु--नहीं, मुझसे बैठा नहीं जायगा, सुन्दरी!

अम्बपाली--'सुन्दरी' कहकर मेरा अपमान न कीजिए।

अजातशत्रु--हाँ, हाँ, समझा, समझा! (हँसकर) सुन्दरी का आग्रह कोई कैसे टाल सकता है। अच्छा, आओ बैठें।

अजातशत्रु बैठ जाता है--किन्तु अम्बपाली खड़ी ही रहती है--अजातशत्रु कहता है--

अजातशत्रु--बैठो, सुन्दरी!

अम्बपाली--क्या नारी सिर्फ सुन्दरी ही होती है?

अजातशत्रु--हाँ, जो सुन्दरी नहीं है, वह नारी नहीं है। ठीक उसी तरह कि जो वीर नहीं है, वह मर्द नहीं है।

अम्बपाली--नारी वीर भी हो सकती है!

अजातशत्रु--और मर्द सुन्दर भी हो सकते हैं। लेकिन इन दोनों को प्राकृतिक गड़बड़झाला ही समझो, सुन्दरी!

अम्बपाली आँखें गड़ाकर अजातशत्रु के चेहरे को देखती है--उसके शीतला के दाग से भरे चेहरे पर अजीब क्रूरता दिखाई पड़ती है--अम्बपाली को यों घूरते देख वह हँसकर बोलता है--

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अजातशत्रु--क्यों ? मैं कुरूप हूँ, यही न देख रही हो ?

अम्बपाली--इसके पीछे की चीज भी ।

अजातशत्रु--तुम मुखमुद्रा पढ़ सकती हो ?

अम्बपाली--आप शस्त्र चला सकते हैं ?

अजातशत्रु--आहा ! (जोरों से हँसकर) तुम-जैसी राजनर्तकी पाकर कोई भी राजसभा धन्य हो सकती है ।

अम्बपाली--(उसका अभिप्राय भाँपकर) आप यों मेरा अपमान नहीं कर सकते ।

अजातशत्रु--मैं तो तुम्हें सम्मान देने आया हूँ । वैशाली-विजेता आज वहाँ की राजनर्तकी अम्बपाली से. . . .

अम्बपाली--(बीच ही में बात काटकर) प्रणय की भीख माँगने आया है ! क्यों, यही न कहना चाहते थे ?

अजातशत्रु--बिलकुल ठीक ! उफ, तुम कितनी बुद्धिमती हो, सुन्दरी !

अम्बपाली--अम्बपाली प्रशंसा की भूखी नहीं है, मगधपति । और वह प्रशंसा वैशाली-विजेता के मुँह से । ऐसी प्रशंसा को वह लानत देती है; घोसले को उजाड़नेवाले बहेलिये से चिड़िया चमकार सुनना पसंद नहीं करती ।

अजातशत्रु--हाँ, पहले पंख फटफटाती है, चंगुल और चोंच चलाती है; लेकिन पीछे पालतू बनकर हाथ पर खेलती है, कन्धे पर फुदकती है और सिर पर घोंसला बनाती है । क्यों ? (अजीब उपेक्षाभाव से हँसता है)

अम्बपाली--(तमककर) कोई ऐसी चिड़िया भी हो सकती है, जो पंख पटक कर मर जाना पसंद करेगी, लेकिन बहेलिये का अहसान न लेगी ।

अजातशत्रु--ऐसी चिड़िया आज तक नहीं देखी गई ।

अम्बपाली--आदमी सिर्फ चिड़िया नहीं है ।

अजातशत्रु--मगधपति साधारण आदमी नहीं है ।

अम्बपाली--अम्बपाली भी साधारण नारी नहीं है ।

अजातशत्रु--तुम क्या बोल रही हो, सुन्दरी ?

अम्बपाली--आप क्या चाह रहे हैं मगधपति ?

अजातशत्रु--मैं क्या चाहता हूँ, यह कहने की जरूरत रह गई ? तो सुनो--(दर्प से) अम्बपाली वैशाली-विजेता की राजनर्तकी बनेगी, उसे राजगृह चलने को निमन्त्रण देने आया हूँ ।

अम्बपाली--और, अगर वह नहीं जाय ?

अजातशत्रु--अजातशत्रु अगर-मगर नहीं जानता !

अम्बपाली--उन्हें जानने को लाचार होना पड़ेगा ।

अजातशत्रु--(आवेश में) क्या कहा ?

अम्बपाली--(लापरवाही से) मैंने कहा, मगधपति को सोचना पड़ेगा कि अम्बपाली अगर मगध जाने को राजी न हुई तो वह क्या करेंगे ?

अजातशत्रु--तुम नहीं जाती ? (भवें टेढ़ी करता है)

अम्बपाली--जरा अपनी भवें सीधी कीजिए, मगधपति । यह हम नारियों का ही शृङ्गार है ।

अजातशत्रु--(आगबबूला होकर) सम्हलकर बोलो राजनर्तकी, तुम किसके सामने बोल रही हो !

अम्बपाली--उसके सामने, जो मुझसे प्रणय-भिक्षा माँगने आया है । भिखारी को घमंड नहीं शोभता !

अजातशत्रु फिर उचककर खड़ा हो जाता है--अजीब उसकी मुखमुद्रा हो रही है--वह बेचैनी से मंच पर टहलने लगता है--कुछ देर तक अम्बपाली चुपचाप खड़ी रहती है--फिर विनम्रता के शब्दों में कहती है--

अम्बपाली--मगधपति !

अजातशत्रु--(कुछ जवाब नहीं देता, टहलता रहता है)

अम्बपाली--मगधपति से मेरा निवेदन है, आसन ग्रहण करें ।

अजातशत्रु--(रुककर, उसके चेहरे पर आँखें गड़ाकर) सुन्दरी, तुम्हें याद रखना चाहिए कि वैशाली-विजेता से बातें कर रही हो !

अम्बपाली--वैशाली-विजेता पर भी जिन्होंने विजय प्राप्त की थी, उनसे भी अम्बपाली ने ऐसी ही बातें की थीं ।

अजातशत्रु--(चौंककर) कौन है, जिसने मुझ पर विजय प्राप्त की ? अजातशत्रु अजय है, राजनर्तकी !

अम्बपाली--आह ! आदमी अभिमान में अपने-आपको इतना भूल जाता है !

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अजातशत्रु--(आँखें गुरेरता है)

अम्बपाली--मेरा मतलब भगवान् बुद्ध से था, मगधपति !

अजातशत्रु--ओहो, अब समझा ! हाँ, सुना था, भगवान् बुद्ध तुम्हारे आम्रकानन में ठहरे थे। उनसे तुम्हारी बातें हुई थीं।

अम्बपाली--सिर्फ एक सन्ध्या को नहीं, सात दिन की सात सन्ध्याएँ उनसे बातें करने में मेरी गुजरीं।

अजातशत्रु--फिर क्या हुआ ?

अम्बपाली--वही, जो दो समान-बलशाली व्यक्तियों की जोर-आजमाई के बाद होता है !

अजातशत्रु--समान-बलशाली ?

अम्बपाली--जी, हाँ। बल सिर्फ तलवार और धनुष में नहीं है, मगधपति। कुछ ऐसी ताकतें भी हैं जिनके सामने तलवारें मोम की तरह गल जाती हैं और धनुष तिनके की तरह टूट जाते हैं। क्या आप भगवान् बुद्ध के निकट धनुष और तलवार लेकर गये थे ?

अजातशत्रु--(कुछ बोलता नहीं, सोचता है)

अम्बपाली--(मुस्कुराती हुई) और अम्बपाली के पास भी आप तलवार और धनुष लेकर नहीं आ सके।

अजातशत्रु--तुम इस भ्रम में न रहो कि मैं निःशस्त्र हूँ।

अम्बपाली--भगवान् बुद्ध ने भी यह कभी न सोचा होगा कि मगधपति साधनहीन होने के कारण उनके पास निःशस्त्र गये थे।

अजातशत्रु--तुम अजीब नारी हो, अम्बपाली।

अम्बपाली--भगवान् बुद्ध ने भी यही कहा था।

अजातशत्रु--उन्होंने और क्या कहा था ?

अम्बपाली--उनसे मेरी बातें अभी रह गई हैं--वह फिर वैशाली पधारेंगे।

अजातशत्रु--अम्बपाली, राजगृह चलो। वहीं गृद्ध्रकूट पर भगवान् के दर्शन करना।

अम्बपाली--मगधपति, अपने को धोखे में मत रखिए। आप मुझे गृद्ध्रकूट पर भगवान् के दर्शन कराने के लिए आमन्त्रित करने नहीं आये हैं। भगवान् और गृद्ध्रकूट का दिव्य सन्देश आपने सुना होता, तो आप यहाँ इस रूप में आते ही नहीं। यहाँ पर आपको बोधि-वृक्ष की छाया नहीं, मार की आँधी उड़ा ले आई है। लेकिन सोचिए, सम्राट, जिसकी एक छोटी-सी तस्वीर ने आपके शरीर से पीला वस्त्र उतरवाया, नर-संहार पर उतारू कराया, उसका वहाँ सशरीर जाना आपके, राजगृह के और मगध के लिए, क्या मङ्गल की बात हो सकती है ?

अम्बपाली की यह बात सुन वह थोड़ी देर असमंजस में पड़ जाता है, लेकिन, फिर जैसे सम्हल कर बोलता है--

अजातशत्रु--मैं अकेला लौट नहीं सकता। (उसकी आवाज भर्राई हुई है)

अम्बपाली--सभी यही कहते हैं, सभी यही चाहते हैं, लेकिन, एक दिन सभी को अकेले लौटना होता है, मगधपति। यही होता आया है, यही होता रहेगा। हाँ, अगर हमने सही मार्ग पकड़ा, तो एक दिन हम सभी एक साथ होंगे--अनन्त काल तक के लिए। सवाल सिर्फ क्षणिक और अनन्त के बीच चुनाव का है, सम्राट !

अजातशत्रु चुप हो जाता है--धीरे-धीरे टहलता है--किन्तु, अब उसके चेहरे पर उत्तेजना या रोष की भयानकता नहीं, विषाद और पराजय की भावना है--वह अचानक जैसे कुछ निर्णय कर लेता है और कहता है--

अजातशत्रु--अम्बपाली, तुमने मुझे पराजित किया, मैं आज ही वापस जा रहा हूँ !

अम्बपाली--वैशाली-विजेता अम्बपाली को यह श्रेय दे रहे हैं, यह उनकी कृपा है !

अजातशत्रु--अजातशत्रु के हृदय में दया, ममता, कृपा, कृतज्ञता आदि कोमल भावनाएँ नहीं हैं, राजनर्तकी। यह सिर्फ जय जानता है। अपनी पराजय को जय मानने की क्षुद्रता इसमें नहीं है। लेकिन, याद रखना, अजातशत्रु पराजय नहीं बर्दाशत कर सकता। मुझे वैशाली-विजय को फिर आना पड़ेगा--

अम्बपाली--आइएगा, पर अब पहले महामन्त्री वस्सकार को नहीं भेजिएगा, सम्राट !

अजातशत्रु--अब उसकी जरूरत नहीं रह गई, अम्बपाली। मेरा वैशाली-विजय का पथ तो प्रशस्त हो चुका है !

वह झपटकर, तेजी से, वहाँ से चल पड़ता है--अम्बपाली उसकी पीठ को एकटक देखती रह जाती है--उसके मुँह से शब्द नहीं निकलता, लेकिन उसकी आँखें पुकार-पुकार कर कह रही हैं, यह अजीब पुरुष है !

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प्राचीन वैशाली के आदर्श[1]

माननीय डाक्टर श्रीकृष्ण सिंह, एम० ए०, बी० एल०

(प्रधान मन्त्री, बिहार)

आज जिस धरती पर खड़े होकर हम वैशाली की प्राचीन सभ्यता और संस्कृति का अभिनन्दन कर रहे हैं, वहाँ ढाई हजार साल पहले प्रजातन्त्रकी तूती बोलती थी। यहाँ वज्जियों के प्रतिनिधि जमा होते थे और शासनकार्य करते थे। जानबूझ कर पश्चिम वालों ने हमारे प्राचीन इतिहास को इस तरह रखा है, जिसमें हमें मालूम पड़े कि हम बराबर निरंकुशतापूर्वक शासित होते आये हैं और हमारे यहाँ प्रजातन्त्र की कोई परम्परा नहीं है। पश्चिम देख लें और अपना अज्ञान दूर कर ले कि जिस समय उसके पूर्वपुरुष जंगलों में घूमते थे, उस समय प्राचीन भारत में प्रजातन्त्रवाद अपने पूरे गौरव के साथ फल-फूल रहा था। आज इस बात की बड़ी जरूरत है कि हमारा इतिहास फिर से लिखा जाय और उसमें से गलत बातों को हटा दिया जाय। हमें अपने देशवासियों को इस ढंग से शिक्षित करना है कि वे न केवल अपने देश का सिर ऊँचा करें, बल्कि विदेशों में भी अपने देश का गौरव बढ़ायें।

आज हमारी स्वतन्त्रता के लिए स्कीम पर स्कीम पेश की जाती है और यह भी कहा जाता है कि भारत में 'डेमोक्रेसी' चल ही नहीं सकती। यह सिर्फ लोगों को छलने का प्रयत्न है। मगर पश्चिम का यह प्रयत्न कभी सफल होने का नहीं। हम जग गये हैं और दूसरों के भुलावे में नहीं आ सकते।

इतिहास में जो वैशाली इतनी प्रसिद्ध है, उसके आदर्श क्या थे--यह जानना बहुत जरूरी है। मगर इस बात को भगवान् बुद्ध ने स्वयं ही अपने प्रवचनमें रख दिया है। इन 'सत्त अपरिहानिया धम्मा' के आदर्श न केवल प्राचीन वैशाली के थे, बल्कि किसी भी प्रजातन्त्र-वादी राष्ट्र के हो सकते हैं।

पहली बात जिस पर भगवान् बुद्ध ने जोर दिया था, वह है शासन-सभाओं में बार बार जुटना और शासन-सभाओं का बार बार होना। ऐसा न होने से देश में तुरत फासिज्म अथवा डिक्टेटरशिप फैल जाता है। अतएव पहला आदर्श भगवान् ने इसे ही रखा था। क्या इससे अभी भी इन्कार किया जा सकता है? शासन-सभाओं के बार बार न होने से जो बुराई होती है, उसे हम यूरोप में हाल में ही देख चुके हैं।

दूसरा आदर्श है मिलकर काम करना, मिलकर उठना-बैठना और मिलकर राष्ट्रीय कर्त्तव्यों को करना। यह बात भी बहुत महत्त्वपूर्ण है। अगर देश में बहुत सी पार्टियाँ हों, शासन-सभा की बैठक भी बार बार होती हो और बहुत प्रतिनिधि उसमें भाग भी लेते हों, मगर मेल के बिना--एकमत हुए बिना--काम आगे नहीं बढ़ता। फ्रांस का इतिहास इसे स्पष्ट करता है, जहाँ की सरकार बराबर बदलती रहती है।

जनतन्त्रवाद का तीसरा मूलमन्त्र भगवान् ने रखा था--बिना कानून बनाये कोई आज्ञा जारी न करना, बने हुए नियम का उच्छेद न करना और अपने पुराने राष्ट्रीय कानूनों का पालन करना। भगवान् बुद्ध अवैधानिकता के विरोधी और मध्यमार्ग के अनुयायी थे। सचमुच जल्द जल्द कानून बदलने से देश में उच्छृङ्खलता फैल जाती है और अपने राष्ट्रीय कानूनों के प्रति लोगों के हृदय में उतनी आस्था नहीं रहती।

वैशाली का चौथा आदर्श था वृद्ध जनों का आदर-सत्कार करना और उनकी सुनने लायक बातों को मानना। अपने लोकनेता के विरुद्ध जाने से देश का भविष्य अनिश्चित हो जाता है; दूसरे, अगर सभी नेता बन जायें, तो भी राष्ट्र का काम नहीं चलेगा। अतएव वृद्ध-बुजुर्गों की बात माननी चाहिए। मगर यहाँ बुद्ध ने वृद्धों या नेताओं को भी एक चेतावनी दे दी है। उनकी सुनने लायक (सोतब्बं) बातों को ही लोग मान सकते हैं--सभी बातों को नहीं। इसलिए नेता को भी सावधानी से अपने लोगों के बीच मार्ग-प्रदर्शन का काम करना चाहिए।

पाँचवाँ आदर्श था स्त्रियों के सम्मान की रक्षा करना--कुल-स्त्रियों या कुलकुमारियों पर अत्याचार और जबर्दस्ती न करना। देश में शान्ति और समृद्धि बनाये रखने के लिए यह नियम भी बहुत जरूरी है। नारी जाति पर जबतक अत्याचार होते रहेंगे, तबतक सुख-शान्ति आने को नहीं।

[1] तृतीय वैशाली-महोत्सव (१४ अप्रैल, १९४७) में सभापति के पद से दिये गये भाषण का एक महत्त्वपूर्ण अंश।

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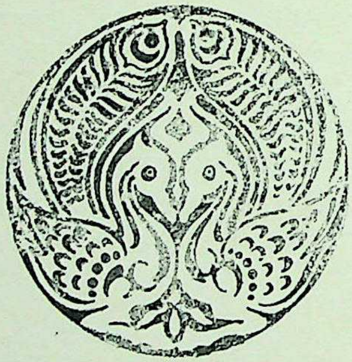
छठा आदर्श था धार्मिक स्थानों का आदर-सत्कार करना। खासकर जहाँ कई धर्मों के मानने वाले लोग हैं, वहाँ इस बात की बड़ी जरूरत हो जाती है। लिच्छवियों ने इस बात को महसूस किया था, क्योंकि वैशाली कई धर्मों का केन्द्र बनती जा रही थी।

वैशाली का सातवाँ आदर्श था धार्मिक पुरुषों को स्वतन्त्रतापूर्वक आने-जाने देना और राज्य में उनकी रक्षा का बन्दोबस्त रखना। वास्तव में किसी भी उन्नत राष्ट्र की यही कसौटी है कि उसमें धार्मिक पुरुष अथवा किसी प्रकार की हानि न पहुँचाने वाले जिज्ञासु पुरुष बिना किसी कठिनाई के आ-जा सकते हैं या नहीं और वहाँ निर्भय होकर घूम सकते हैं या नहीं। अगर इस प्रकार की सुविधा नहीं है, तो उस राष्ट्र को पूरे अर्थ में सभ्य नहीं माना जा सकता।

भगवान् बुद्ध ने प्राचीन वैशाली के जिन आदर्शों को बतलाया है, उनके अनुसार चलने की जरूरत अभी भी हमें है। ये आदर्श वस्तुतः सब काल के लिए अनुकरणीय हैं। इनका पालन करके ही कोई राष्ट्र सच्चे अर्थ में प्रजातन्त्र का विकास कर सकता है। इसलिए प्राचीन वैशाली के आदर्शों से प्रेरणा लेकर अपनी जन्मभूमि का नवनिर्माण करना हमारा परम कर्त्तव्य है।



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वैशाली-दिग्दर्शन[१]

श्री जगदीश चन्द्र माथुर, आई० सी० एस०

(गुनगुनाते हुए पथिक का प्रवेश—)

....खोजता हूँ—
खोजता हूँ मौन धरती में निमंत्रण
जो युगों की याद में रम
गंध सा
खँडहरों के दलित कुसुमों पर लुभाता
राह खोये मुझ भ्रमर को।
खोजता हूँ—
स्मृति सौरभ रज्जु का लेकर सहारा
खोजता हूँ....खोजता हूँ—(फिर गुनगुनाता)

(एक ग्रामीण का प्रवेश)

ग्रा०—तुम कौन ?

प०—मैं ! पथिक।....यात्री।

ग्रा०—यात्री ? बसाढ़ में यात्री ? क्या यह तीर्थस्थान है जो तुम यहाँ यात्रा करने आये हो ?

प०—बसाढ़ ? यह जगह बसाढ़ है ?

ग्रा०—वाह भई, इतना भी नहीं जानते ? यह है मुजफ्फरपुर जिले का गाँव बसाढ़।

प०—हूँ।....मैं बसाढ़ के इन खँडहरों, इस भग्न गढ़, इन सूखे तालों में अपने खोये हुए तीरथ को खोज रहा हूँ, भाई !

ग्रा०—कौन तीरथ ?

प०—वैशाली ! जिसे तुम बसाढ़ कहते हो, पहले वह वैशाली नगरी थी।

"वैशाली इतिहास-पृष्ठ पर अंकन अंगारों का,
वैशाली अतीत-गह्वर में गुंजन तलवारों का,
वैशाली ! जन का प्रतिपालक, गण का आदि विधाता।
जिसे ढूँढ़ता देश आज, उस प्रजातंत्र की माता।"

ग्रा०—मैं तो यह सब नहीं जानता।

प०—मैं तुम्हें दिखाऊँगा। चलोगे मेरे साथ ?

ग्रा०—कहाँ ?

प०—दूर—सदियों पीछे। मैं समय का पथिक हूँ। अपनी पलकों के पाँवड़ों से युगों को नापता हूँ। मेरे साथ चलो—आज से ढाई हजार वर्ष पूर्व, जब गंगा, गंडक हिमांचल से आबद्ध इस सुरम्य प्रान्त में लिच्छवि निवास करते थे। यह एक तेजस्वी क्षत्रिय जाति थी जिसने वैशाली में ईसा से लगभग ७००, ८०० वर्ष पूर्व जनतंत्र को चलाया; यों तो पुराणों के अनुसार सूर्यवंशी राजा इक्ष्वाकु के वंशज राजा विशाल ने इस नगरी की स्थापना की थी। वाल्मीकीय रामायण में भी लिखा है कि विश्वामित्र के साथ जनकपुरी जाते हुए राम और लक्ष्मण ने दूर से वैशाली के उन्नत शिखरों और भव्य भवनों को देखा। परन्तु लिच्छवियों द्वारा वैशाली का उत्थान हुआ महाभारत के समर के उपरान्त जब उत्तरी भारत की राज्यप्रणाली खंड-खंड हो रही थी। उस समय गण्डक-घाटी में नौगण या

[१] आॅल-इण्डिया रेडियो (पटना) के सौजन्य से।

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जनतांत्रिक जातिसमूहों का राज्य था जिनमें प्रमुख थे वैशाली के लिच्छवि और कुशीनारा के मल्ल।....इन नौ गणों को एक सूत्र में बांधनेवाला संघ वज्जिसंघ कहलाता था। वैशाली इसी वज्जिसंघ का केन्द्र थी। वज्जिसंघ ने नौ गणों को आंतरिक शासन में पूरी आजादी दे रखी थी। केवल बाहरी आक्रमण और विदेशी नीति का अधिकार संघ के हाथ में था। संघ में सब गण बराबर थे, न कोई सम्राट् था, न कोई महाराजाधिराज।

ग्रा०—उस समय भी पंचायती राज था क्या पथिक ?

प०—हाँ, आज हम उसे भूल गये हैं। लेकिन उन नौगणों में से वैशाली के लिच्छविगण की शासनप्रणाली सबसे अधिक सुव्यवस्थित थी। उस समय वैशाली में लिच्छवियों के ७७०७ कुटुम्ब थे; हरेक कुटुम्ब का प्रमुख व्यक्ति गणसभा का सभासद् होता था और गण-राजन् कहलाता था। लेकिन गणसभा की कार्यवाहक समिति एक और छोटी सभा थी जिसे अष्टकुलक कहते थे। आठ प्रमुख गण-राजन् इसके सदस्य थे और प्रायः गणसभा इन्हें चुना करती थी। अष्टकुलकों में से प्रत्येक का अलग अलग रंग था, विशेष उत्सवों और अवसरों पर हरेक अष्टकुलक उसी रंग के वस्त्र आभूषण पहन कर, उसी रंग के घोड़े पर सवार होकर जाते। जब गणसभा की बैठक होती तो उसे गणसन्निपात कहा जाता और उस बैठक के स्थान—सभाभवन—का नाम था संस्थागार। संस्थागार के निकट ही एक पुष्करिणी थी—'अभिषेक-पुष्करिणी' जिसमें केवल गणराजन् ही स्नान करने के अधिकारी थे। जब नये गणराजन् का अभिषेक होता, तब बड़े समारोह के साथ वह इस पुष्करिणी में स्नान करता।....देखते हो वह पुष्करिणी ?....

ग्रा०—वह ? वह तो 'खरौना पोखर' है।

प०—वहीं अभिषेक-पुष्करिणी थी भाई ! उसके दोनों तरफ जो टीले देखते हो वहाँ उन्नत शिखरवाले भवन थे, जहाँ लिच्छवि ललनाएँ बैठकर अभिषेकोत्सव देखती थीं।

(रुक जाता है। उस नीरव में वीणा के कुछ मंद स्वर जो क्रमशः तीव्र होते जाते हैं और उसमें और वाद्यों का संगीत भी मिलता जाता है।)

ग्रा०—कहो पथिक ! रुक क्यों गये ?

प०—तुम्हें कुछ दीखता है ? वह—भवनों की रूपरेखा।

ग्रा०—हाँ—आँ।....संस्थागार, पुष्करिणी, जैसे बादलों के पीछे चाँद—

प०—अभिषेक-पुष्करिणी—वे भवन, वह जनसमूह—(वाद्यस्वर तीव्र हो रहा है।)

ग्रा०—यह क्या हो रहा है, पथिक ! यह कैसा चमत्कारपूर्ण दृश्य !

प०—सदियों के पर्दे उठे हैं।....समय का पंछी हमें उड़ाये लिए जा रहा है—ढाई हजार बरस पूर्व। वह देखो....ढाई हजार वर्ष पूर्व लिच्छवियों का अभिषेकोत्सव।—

(वाद्य-स्वर घोर निनाद में परिणत हो जाता है—तुरीयगतिसे।)

(कोलाहल, फिर एक उच्च स्वर।)

प्रतिहारी—"सावधान, सावधान, सर्वगुणसम्पन्न लिच्छिविगणाधिपति अष्टकुलक पधारते हैं। सबसे आगे महानायक चेटक हैं। उनके पीछे अन्य सातों वर्णवाले अष्टकुलक हैं। और सबसे पीछे आजके अभिषेकपात्र उपराजन् महालि हैं, जिन्हें गणसन्निपात ने गणराजन् चुना है। महानायक दीक्षा देंगे। आर्यमहालि लिच्छविगण के प्रति प्राणप्रतिष्ठा की शपथ लेंगे। उनके बाद युवक-युवतियों का यूथनृत्य होगा।—सावधान !

(तुरही का स्वर)

अभिवादकगण—"पीतास्या, पीतरथा, पीतरश्मि प्रत्योदमुष्णीशा।
पीता च पंचककुदा पीता वस्त्रा अलंकारा।
नीलास्या, नीलरथा, नीलरश्मि प्रत्योदमुष्णीशा।
नीला च पंचककुदा नीला वस्त्रा अलंकारा।

(कोलाहल, फिर महानायक चेटक बोलते हैं।)

चे०—आर्यमहालि ! आपको सुदूर तक्षशिला में शिक्षा प्राप्त करने भेजा गया था। वहाँ आपने वैशाली का नाम ऊँचा किया। आपकी उस कीर्ति और आपके गुणों पर मुग्ध होकर गणसभा ने आपको गणराजन् निर्वाचित किया है। इस पुष्करिणी में स्नान करने के पूर्व आपको हमारी परम प्रिय नगरी के इन सब नर-नारियों के सामने वह व्रत लेना है, जो आपको इस अभिषेक के उपयुक्त बनायगा। भन्तेगण सुनें। आर्यमहालि के बचन सुनें।

महालि—"मैं, क्षेमेन्द्र का पुत्र महालि, प्रतिज्ञा करता हूं कि मैं लिच्छवि मर्यादाओं का सर्वदा पालन करूँगा, गणसभा में एकमत होकर आच-

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रण करूँगा, वज्जियों की प्राचीन संस्थाओं का सम्मान करूँगा, वृद्धों और बड़े बूढ़ों का उचित आदर करूँगा। स्त्रियों और बालिकाओं पर बलप्रयोग नहीं करूँगा। वज्जीके चैत्यों की प्रतिष्ठा करूँगा, अपने अर्हतों का उचित रक्षण करूँगा और कठोर एवं श्रमशील जीवन बरतूँगा।...."

चे०––धन्य हो गणराजन् महालि! यही लिच्छवियों की सच्ची मर्यादा है, जिसके लिए वैशाली युगयुगों तक प्रसिद्ध रहेगी। अब आप पुण्यसलिला पुष्करिणी में स्नान करें और हमारी नगरी की पताका को, जिस पर सिंह का लिच्छवि चिह्न अंकित है, प्रणाम करें।

(विराट् संगीत और नृत्य की ध्वनि जो धीरे धीरे मन्द हो जाती है।)

चे०––कौन? आर्यवासव! गंगातीर से यहाँ क्यों आये? तुम्हें तो उल्काचेल में रहकर वज्जिसंघ के शत्रुओं पर ध्यान रखना था।

वा०––शत्रु कटिबद्ध है आर्यचेटक।

चे०––कौन शत्रु?

वा०––मगधराज बिम्बिसार। मैंने देखा, गंगा के उस पार पाटलि गाम के पास नौकाओं में उसकी सेना सवार हो चली है।

चे०––यह धृष्टता! हम प्रस्तुत हैं। प्रतिहारी! तुरही बजाओ। भन्तेगण, आपने सुना बिम्बिसार हमारे प्यारे वज्जिसंघ पर आक्रमण कर रहा है। उसे वैशाली की संघशक्ति का अनुमान नहीं है।

(सम्मिलित स्वर––"हम उसे कुचल देंगे"––।)

चे०––अवश्य! अभी गणसन्निपात होगा। सब लोग संस्थागार में चलें (कोलाहल)। और सुनिये। हमारे नये गणराजन् महालि, जिनका अभी अभिषेक हुआ है, सुदूर तक्षशिला में सैन्यशिक्षा प्राप्त कर चुके हैं। गण की ओर से युद्ध का भार उन्हीं पर होगा।

महालि––मैं प्रस्तुत हूं, महानायक! जय लिच्छविगण की जय! (सम्मिलित स्वर––"जय लिच्छविगण की जय"।)

चे०––आर्यमहालि, आप सबके साथ संस्थागार चलें। मैं अभी आता हूँ, (जयध्वनि)। वासव! तुम किस मार्ग से आये?

वा०––उत्तर पथ से। पहले कुण्डग्राम गया। सोचा, शायद आप वहाँ हों।

चे०––कुण्डग्राम में बहन त्रिशला के पास मैं बहुत दिनों से नहीं गया हूँ।

वा०––तब तो आपको एक नूतन समाचार न मालूम होगा?

चे०––क्या?

वा०––आपकी बहन त्रिशला के आज ही एक पुत्र उत्पन्न हुआ है।

चे०––सच?....त्रिशला का पुत्र शुभ घड़ी में आया, जब सारी वैशाली में वीर भाव छाया हुआ है। जानते हो वासव! मैं उसका क्या नाम रखूँगा?....महावीर!

वा०––महावीर?

चे०––हाँ! लिच्छविपुत्र महावीर। उसके हाथों सारे भूखण्ड में वैशाली का प्रताप फैलेगा। महावीर वर्धमान।

(वाद्यसंगीत जो धीरे धीरे मंद हो जाता है। पट परिवर्तन।)

ग्रामीण––पथिक, तो क्या सच ही इस महावीर ने अपने भुजबल और वीरता से सारे भूखण्ड को वैशाली के अधीन कर दिया?

पथिक––हाँ, लेकिन भुजबल से नहीं, आत्मबल से। ये ही वे महावीर स्वामी थे जिनके द्वारा बढ़ाये गये जैनधर्म को आज दिन भी भारतवर्ष में हजारों स्त्री पुरुष मानते हैं। ये जैनों के २४वें तीर्थंकर माने जाते हैं। इन्होंने श्री पार्श्वनाथ के मत को अपनाकर उसे परिष्कृत रूप दिया। तुम्हारे इस गाँव से सटा जो बासु-कुण्ड गाँव है, वही तब कुण्डग्राम कहलाता था और यहीं उनका जन्म हुआ। तीस वर्षों तक सांसारिक जीवन बिता कर फिर वह श्रमण बनकर निकल पड़े। सारा वज्जी और मगध प्रदेश उनके उपदेशों से अनुप्राणित हो चला। लेकिन वैशाली को वे न भूले और बहुत बार वे वर्षावास करने कुण्डग्राम भी आये। उस समय वैशाली के प्रमुख और समृद्धिशाली व्यक्ति उनके शिष्य थे––सेनापति सिंह, श्रेष्ठि आनन्दगाथापति, इत्यादि। जब मैं बासुकुण्ड को देखता हूँ तो मुझे ऐसा आभास होता है, मानो अब भी उनके शिष्य उनके चरणों में बैठे हैं और उनके उपदेशामृत का पान कर रहे हैं।

(संगीत ध्वनि, पट परिवर्तन)

महावीर वर्धमान :––सेनापति सिंह, आज कल तुम बहुत व्यस्त रहते हो।

सिंह––हे निगण्ठनातपुत्त, मैं कितना भी व्यस्त रहूँ, आपके उपदेश मुझे चिन्ता से मुक्त करते रहेंगे।

महा०––सेनापति सिंह, सुनो! मैं नहीं, तुम्हारी आन्तरिक शक्ति ही तुम्हें मुक्त करेगी। जीव स्वावलम्बी और स्वतन्त्र है। वह अनन्त चतुष्टय से परिपूर्ण है और अनन्त सामर्थ्यवान् है। परन्तु वह अपनी इस अनन्त सामर्थ्य को स्वयं ही नहीं पहचानता। जिस दिन पहचान जाता है उसी दिन से क्लेशमय बन्धनों से विमुक्त हो जाता है। इसको पहचानो। अपने में ही नहीं, जगत् के कोने कोने में।

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सिंह—हे नातपुत्त ! मैंने आज संस्थागार में कुछ लिच्छवियों को यह कहते सुना कि राजगृह से शाक्यश्रमण गौतम आये हैं और कल्याण के नूतनपथ का प्रदर्शन कर रहे हैं।

महा०—तुम श्रमण गौतम के पास जाना चाहते हो ?

सिंह—यदि नातपुत्त की आज्ञा हो तो।

महा०—सेनापति, तुम एक ही पथ पर स्थिर रहो, तो अच्छा है। श्रमणगौतम तो कर्मफल को, मुक्ति को मानते नहीं ! उनके सिद्धान्त तुम्हें विचलित कर देंगे। जब तक तुम स्वस्थ हो, तुम्हारी इन्द्रियों में शक्ति है, तब तक मेरे बताये धर्म पर आचरण करते रहो, तुम्हें शान्ति मिलेगी।

जरा जाव न पीडेइ वाही छाव न वड्ढइ,
जाविंदिया न हायन्ति, ताव धर्म्म समायरे।

(संगीत ध्वनि-पट परिवर्तन)

ग्रामीण—पथिक, ये श्रमण गौतम कौन थे, जिन्होंने वैशाली के सेनापति को अपनी ओर आकृष्ट किया ?

पथिक—ये थे महात्मा गौतमबुद्ध, जिनके बौद्ध-धर्म की ज्योति ने सारे एशियाको देदीप्यमान कर रखा है। वैशाली नगरी में तो उस समय जितने नये आदर्श, नये धर्म, उत्पन्न होते थे, सभी के लिए जगह थी। गौतमबुद्ध का नाम सुना, तो लिच्छवियों ने बड़े आग्रह के साथ उन्हें बुलाया और कहते हैं कि बुद्धभगवान् के चरण रखते ही वैशाली में जो महामारियाँ छायी हुई थीं, सब गायब हो गयीं। फिर तो वे अक्सर वैशाली आने लगे। वह अशोक का सिंहस्तम्भ देखते हो ?

ग्रा०—वह ? हम लोग तो उसे भीमसेनकी लाठी कहते हैं।

प०—भाई ! वह राजा अशोक का बनवाया हुआ स्तम्भ है—उसी जगह जहाँ बुद्ध भगवान् अक्सर ठहरा करते थे। और देखो यह टीला है न। वह टीला एक स्तूप था, जिसके नीचे भगवान् बुद्ध के शरीर का एक अंश दबा कर रखा गया था।

ग्रा०—अच्छा ?

प०—हाँ भाई ! बुद्ध भगवान् को वैशाली और उसके लिच्छवि बहुत प्रिय थे। एक दिन की बात है, वैशाली के निकट महावन में भगवान् बुद्ध ध्यानावस्थित बैठे हुए थे और उनके निकट थे एक वृद्ध लिच्छवि महानाम। इतने में कुछ उच्छृंखल लिच्छवि युवकों का समूह गाना गाते हुए, शोर मचाते हुए आखेटके लिए वहाँ आया।

(संगीत। पट परिवर्तन)

महा०—देखिये तथागत, ये उच्छृंखल लिच्छवि युवक कितना ऊधम मचा रहे हैं। भला इनसे क्या आशा करें कि ये तथागत के धर्मकी शरण लेंगे।

बुद्ध—ठहरो महानाम ! इन्हें आने दो। (कोलाहल कम हो जाता है, बुद्ध के पास आते ही वे चुप हो जाते हैं।) आओ भाई, बैठो। अभय, यहाँ आओ, माणिक्य बैठो न। भद्र बैठ जाओ। (कुछ देर ठहर कर) महानाम ! अब बोलो क्या कह रहे थे तुम ?

महानाम—मैं अचरज में पड़ गया हूँ। ये लिच्छवि युवक जिनकी उच्छृंखलता और उपद्रव से हम बड़े बूढ़े त्रस्त हैं, वे इस समय अपना उपाधिपूर्ण स्वभाव तज कर, धनुष बाण त्याग तथागत के निकट कितने शान्त और सौम्य बने बैठे हैं। यह अमिताभ के अनन्त प्रकाश का प्रभाव है।

बुद्ध—महानाम, इनकी उच्छृंखलता से त्रस्त मत होओ। ये लिच्छवि युवक तुम्हारी वैशाली नगरी के प्राण हैं। जानते हो क्यों ? एक बार मगधमंत्री वर्षकार ने मुझ से पूछा कि क्या अजातशत्रु लिच्छवियों को परास्त कर सकता है ? मैंने कहा कि लिच्छवि युवक तो काठ के तकिये लगा कर सोते हैं; परिश्रमी और उत्साही हैं, आलस्य का उनमें नाम नहीं है, कठोर जीवन के आदी हैं। जब तक उनमें ये गुण हैं, तब तक उनकी पराजय सम्भव नहीं, चाहे वे कितने उच्छृंखल हों।

महानाम—और भगवान् ! यहाँ की युवतियाँ ? वैशाली की युवतियाँ तो सागर की फेनिल लहरों की भाँति नृत्य और आमोद-प्रमोद में थिरकती रहती हैं।

बुद्ध—जिस युवति समाज की शिरोमणि अम्बापाली जैसा रत्न है, वह सम्मानका पात्र है।

महा०—अम्बापाली ? गणिका ?

(अम्बापाली का प्रवेश)

अम्बा—हाँ, अम्बापाली गणिका। वैशाली की सौन्दर्य-महिषी, अम्बापाली। तथागत को मेरा प्रणाम स्वीकार हो।

बुद्ध—आज तुम बहुत उल्लसित हो भद्रे !

अम्बा—उल्लसित क्यों न होऊँ भगवन् ! आज तथागत मेरे घर—अम्बापाली के आम्रकाननमें—पधारेंगे। आज मेरा गौरव सीमाहीन

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है । कल जब तथागत ने मेरा निमंत्रण स्वीकार किया, तो लौटते समय वैशाली के राजपथ पर चार पाँच गणराजों के रथों से मेरा रथ अटक गया । मैंने सारथी से कहा—रथ आगे बढ़ाओ । गणराजन् बोले—"गणिका की इतनी स्पर्धा ।" मैंने जवाब दिया—"हाँ, जिसके यहाँ तथागत पधारेंगे, उसका रथ पवन की होड़ लेगा ।" वे अहंकार से हँसे और बोले, "तथागत और गणिका के यहाँ ! उन्हें आमंत्रित करने तो हम जा रहे हैं ।"

बुद्ध—भद्रे, वे गणराजन् मेरे पास आये थे ।

अ०—(चिन्तित स्वर) भगवन् ! मेरे निमंत्रण को ठुकरा कर कहीं आप उनके यहाँ तो न जाइयेगा ?

बुद्ध—नहीं, भद्रे ! तथागत वचनवद्ध हैं । मैंने उनका निमंत्रण अस्वीकार कर दिया ।

अ०—दासी आभारी है ।

बुद्ध—लेकिन आज मेरे साथ तुम्हारे आम्रकानन में वे गणराजन् भी आयँगे ।

अ०—अवश्य आयें । राजपुत्रों के स्वागत में अम्बापाली कुशल है ।

बुद्ध—आज वे राजपुत्र की तरह नहीं, एक भिक्षु के पीछे आ रहे हैं ।

अ०—जिसके अमूल्य वचनों की भिक्षा पाने को जम्बूद्वीप आतुर रहता है, उसे मैं भिक्षु कैसे समझूँ ?

बुद्ध—तुम्हारा वाक्-चातुर्य धन्य है, भद्रे ! तुम्हारी यह जन्मभूमि वैशाली धन्य है । वैशाली ने तथागत को क्रय कर लिया है । इसके सुरम्य भवन, इसके गगनचुम्बी चैत्य, इसके निवासियों की उदारता—सभी में मुझे अनुपम आकर्षण लगता है । वैशाली में तथागत को अमूल्य पंचरत्न मिले हैं—धम्म की परिणति, धम्म के सच्चे अनुयायी, कृतज्ञजन, तथागत की अवतारणा और तथागत के धम्म के प्रचारक । युगयुगों तक तथागत की स्मृति में वैशाली संयुक्त रहेगी ।

(वाद्य संगीत । पट परिवर्तन ।)

ग्रामीण—ऐसी जो वैशाली नगरी थी पथिक, उस पर तो कोई हाथ नहीं लगा सकता था ।

पथिक—वह एक करुण कहानी है भाई ! मगध के राजा बिम्बिसार को तो लिच्छवियों ने बुरी तरह हराया । लेकिन उन्होंने अपनी प्राचीन प्रथा के विपरीत अपने महानायक चेटक की पुत्री छलना का विवाह भी बिम्बिसार से कर दिया । छलना का पुत्र हुआ अजातशत्रु—निर्मम, निष्ठुर, महत्त्वाकांक्षी सम्राट् जिसने अपने पिता को बन्दी किया । अपनी माँ के घरवालों—लिच्छवियों—को क्यों छोड़ता ? लिच्छवियों पर आक्रमण करने के लिए उसने पाटलिपुत्र में विशाल दुर्ग बनवाया । पहला आक्रमण तो निष्फल रहा, क्योंकि लिच्छवि एक मत होकर जनतंत्र के लिए लड़े । लेकिन दूसरी बार उसने अपने मंत्री वर्षकार को लिच्छवियों के बीच फूट डलवाने के लिए भेजा और इस तरह वैशाली को बिना युद्ध किये ही पराजित कर दिया ।

ग्रा०—क्या तभी से वैशाली की वह दशा हुई, जो आज है ?

प०—नहीं । यद्यपि वज्जिसंघ की राजनीतिक शक्ति नष्टप्राय हो गयी, तथापि लिच्छवि-जाति का शौर्य और प्रताप सदियों तक उत्तर भारत को प्रभावित करता रहा । बुद्ध के मरने के सौ वर्ष बाद वैशाली में ७०० बौद्ध-भिक्षुओं की द्वितीय धर्म-सभा हुई । अन्य राज्यों के नृप लिच्छवि कुटुम्बों से विवाह सम्बन्ध स्थापित करने को इच्छुक रहे और यहाँ तक कि ईसा की चौथी शताब्दी में गुप्त साम्राज्य के संस्थापक चन्द्रगुप्त प्रथम ने एक लिच्छवि कुमारी कुमारदेवी से विवाह किया । उसके पुत्र ने तो अपने सिक्कों पर खुदवाया—"लिच्छविदौहित्र"

ग्रा०—पथिक, हमारे यहाँ तो कई सोने के सिक्के मिले हैं, बड़े सुन्दर ।

प०—वे गुप्त सम्राटों के ही हैं । तुमने एक सिक्का देखा होगा, जिसमें सम्राट् चन्द्रगुप्त विक्रमादित्य एक धनुष लिए खड़े हैं । इन्हीं सम्राट् के समय में चीन से एक यात्री आया—फाह्यान ।

(घंटों की ध्वनि)

फा०—"यही वैशाली है ?"

स्वर—हाँ, इधर से आओ यात्री । तुम चीन देश से कब चले थे ?

फा०—कई बरस हुए । भिक्खु, यह कौन भवन है ?

स्वर—कूटागारशाला । यहीं तथागत प्रायः विहार करते और उपदेश देते थे । कैसा रमणीक भवन है ! यह तुम लिख रहे हो यात्री ?

फा०—हाँ, लिख रहा हूँ, जिससे मेरे देश के निवासी वैशाली की दिव्यनगरी की शोभा का अंदाजा लगा सकें । और बताओ, भिक्खु, इस पावन नगरी का माहात्म्य और बताओ ।

(घंटों की ध्वनि । पट परिवर्तन)

पथिक—दो सौ साल बाद उसी चीन देश से एक और यात्री वैशाली आया और उसका नाम था—ह्वेनसांग । उसने लिखा है—

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(अन्य स्वर में—)

"इस देश की भूमि उत्तम और उपजाऊ है। फल और फूल अधिक होते हैं। प्रकृति स्वाभाविक और सह्य है तथा मनुष्यों का आचरण शुद्ध और सच्चा है। ये लोग धर्म से प्रेम और विद्या की बड़ी प्रतिष्ठा करते हैं। विरोधी और बौद्ध दोनों मिल जुल कर रहते हैं।"

ग्रा०—पथिक !

प०—हाँ !

ग्रा०—क्या वैसी वैशाली फिर नहीं होगी ?

प०—भाई ! उसी की खोज में मैं इन खँडहरों में मारा मारा फिर रहा हूँ। इस लिच्छवि भूमि की पवित्र धूलि, इसकी ये ध्वस्त मूर्तियाँ, यह अकेला अशोकस्तम्भ, ये सूखते-से ताल—सभी में बीते हुए वैभव की कहानियाँ बिखरी पड़ी हैं।

ग्रा०—उनमें एक और चीज छिपी पड़ी है, पथिक !

प०—क्या ?

ग्रा०—आने वाले वैभव के सपने !

प०—तुम्हारी बात मैंने नहीं समझी, भाई !

ग्रा०—पथिक ! मैं एक साधारण ग्रामीण हूँ। लेकिन तुमने मेरी आँखें खोल दीं। तुमने मुझे बताया कि मैं किस विशाल धरोहर का उत्तराधिकारी हूँ। तुमने मुझे पिछले युगों का सिंहावलोकन कराया। अतः मैं तुम्हारी खोज पूरी करूँगा। मैं भविष्य के गौरवमय युग का निर्माण करूँगा। मैं इन खँडहरों की नींव पर नयी वैशाली को खड़ा करूँगा। मैं लिच्छवियों की सन्तान हूँ—वह जिसे काल नष्ट नहीं कर सकता, जिसे सदियों की धूलि छिपा नहीं सकती। मैं वैशाली की अमर ज्योति हूँ—जनशक्ति और गणतंत्र की निर्भय आवाज़ हूँ। आओ मेरे साथ। गाओ मेरे संग—

(सम्मिलित स्त्री पुरुष स्वर में—)

"जय लिच्छविगान ! जय क्षत्रिय-प्राण !
"जय जय वैशाली गणमान।
सिंहों के पूत, यौवन के दूत।
इक-सम वैशाली संतान।
जय जय वैशालीगणमान ॥

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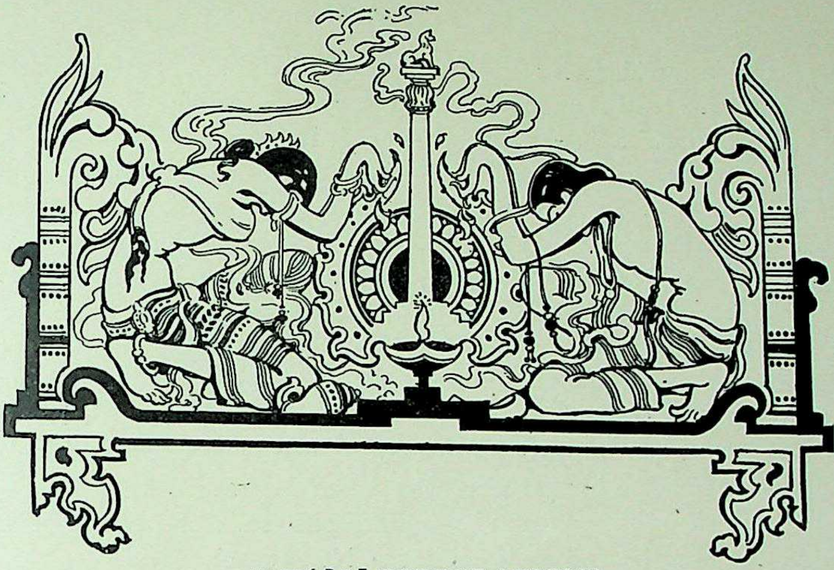

VAIŚĀLĪ CORPORATIONS

(AN ASPECT OF CORPORATE LIFE IN ANCIENT VAIŚĀLĪ)

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A detailed, critical study of the antiquities unearthed at Basāṛh is a desideratum. It will throw new valuable light on administrative, social and cultural history of Northern India, and specially of N. Bihar during an approximate period of 800 years, from the Mauryan to the Gupta ages. An attempt has been made in this article to study a few references to corporations or guilds contained in inscribed seals found at Basāṛh, which represents the site of Vaiśālī.

Dr. T. Bloch considered the inscribed clay seals (numbering 720, with over 1,100 seal inscriptions, 120 varieties) to be "the most interesting find" among the antiquities, found during his excavations in 1903-4, and going back to the Gupta period. In 1912 Dr. D. B. Spooner also found in all 235 seals with 283 impressions; and some of his seals throw light on those of Dr. Bloch. There is absolutely no doubt, judging from the facts about economic life of India in pre-Gupta and post-Gupta periods, that huge organisations (śreṇi) for commercial purposes were made by traders, bankers, manufacturers, and producers and that there was a continuous history of the corporations and guilds during this period. It is interesting to note that while Dr. Spooner's seals, generally representing pre-Gupta periods, mostly refer to *Sreṣṭhiniga-masya* (i.e., seals of the Guild of Bankers)[1], Dr. Bloch's seals, generally representing the Gupta period contain numerous references to *Sreṣṭhi-sārthavāha-kulika-nigama* or sometimes *nigama*, i.e., corporation or guild of bankers, traders and merchants or elderly house-holders[2]. This

[1] Nos. 808, 270A, 69B. A.S.I.R. 1913-14. Dr. Spooner observed: "In all, sixteen specimens of this seal were recovered....a very unusual number for any one type in this collection. Banking was evidently as prominent in Vaiśālī as we should have expected it to be, judging from the notice in Manu to the effect that the people in Magadha were bards and traders." (*Ibid.*, 122)

[2] No. 5, 29, A.S.I.R. 1903-4.

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is almost always combined with seals of private individuals[1] and in one case with the seal of the Chief of Prince's Ministers:[2] two or more seals of private persons are found together or with the seal of the guild of bankers, to which they evidently belonged. Dr. Bloch thinks: "It looks, as if during those days something like a modern Chamber of Commerce existed in upper India at some big trading centre, perhaps at Pataliputra........most of the persons to whom the seals belonged carried on business transactions with the royal family of Vaiśālī."[3] The seals of temples and seals with religious legends also contain names of *Kulikas.* One Mātṛdāsa is referred to in Nos. 41 and 92: in both his seal is combined with that of the guild and those of some common *Kulikas.* Probably, he is to be identified with the Mātṛdāsa of the mutilated Gadhwa stone inscription of Chandra Gupta II: "headed by Mātṛdāsa......for the purpose of increasing the religious merit.....fashioned......the Brāhmaṇas of the community of a perpetual almshouse......by ten *dināras.*" In No. 55 Dr. Bloch explains *Dharmmo-rakṣati-rakṣita* as 'a proper name, rather than as a benedictory formula'[4] regarding him as a member of the guild, as his seal occurs along with that of the latter. Some seals with no proper names, but only benedictory formulas, contain also seals of private individuals (e.g., Nos. 33, 38, 40) and those of the mercantile guild (e.g., Nos. 39, 40).

Corporate activity, similar to that suggested by Basāṛh seals, is also suggested by epigraphic[5] and literary records[6] of the period.

An analysis of the inscriptions yield the names of several individuals belonging to the following classes:[7]

(a) *Kulika*:—

Hari (40, 46, 51, 66, 76, 77, 94, 97)

Umābhaṭṭa (40, 49, 50, 61, 66, 87, 94) [Dr. Bloch found many specimens of Nāgasiṁha's seal along with other seals, specially the seal of Umābhaṭṭa. Dr. Spooner also found the latter's seal (272 B., A. S. I. R. 1913-14) p. 138]

Sālibhadra (45, 49, 50, 51, 66, 81, 94, 97, 98)

Dhaṇa (50, 66)

Harih (50)

Umāpālita (57, 83)

Vargga (60, 84)

Ugrasena (60)

Krisṇadatta (45, 63, 78, 92)

Sukhita (66, 82, 92)

Nāgadatta (41, 68, 79)

[1] Vide Nos. 43, 44, 45, in *Ibid.* e.g. Ajapāla, Āryyabhaṭṭa, Aryyanandi and others. Sometimes we get only the words śresṭhi-kulika-nigama (No. 28).

[2] No. 5 of A.S.I.R. 1903-4.

[3] A.S.I.R. 1903-4.

[4] "Victorious is the Lord, E.G., Ananta (*Śiva*) with Ambā (*Durgā*) (32); "Victorious is the Lord" (33); "Victorious is the Lord Ananta (*Śiva*) the chosen husband of Nandeśvarī (*Durgā*) (37).

[5] Gadhwa stone inscription of Chandra Gupta II.

[6] *Mudrārākṣasa; Daśakumāracharita.*

[7] The figure in the brackets indicate the number of seals in A.S.I.R. 1903-4.

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Goṇḍa (45, 62, 75)
Nanda (80)
Varmma (33, 85)
Gauridāsa (94)

(b) *Sārthavāha*:—
Doḍḍa (50, 94, 105)

(c) *Śreṣṭhi*:—
Ṣaṣ(ṭh)i(datta) (94,109).
Śrīdāsa (45,96,110)

Kuloṭa, son of Gomika (59, 62, 88): The seal of Gomika was found by Dr. Spooner (1912); the two seals, of the father and the son, were of the same general style showing that the son followed the father's tradition, and that Gomika was also a banker.

Dr. Spooner found the names of the following bankers:[1]

(i) Vishnudāsa—adding his own signet to that of the Banker's guild (8 A, 8 B).

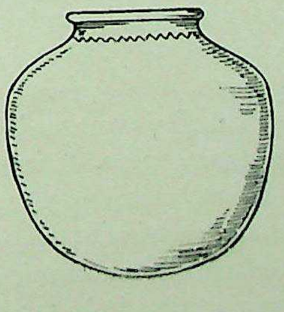
(ii) Vyāghrabala—adding his own signet to that of the Banker's guild (14, 167, 271, 282).

(iii) Bhadradāsa, using, besides his own private signet, the seal also of the guild of Bankers (70, 81, 178, 270 B).

Prathama Kulika :—
Hari (51, 66, 96, 97, 99)—describing himself both as *Kulika* (76, 77) and *Prathama Kulika*.
Ugrasiṁha (44, 60, 100).

The identification of these and other names on the Basāṛh seals, from a critical study of other classes of sources, epigraphic and literary, will throw new light on the organisation and working of the guilds of Vaiśālī.

[1] The figures within brackets are the numbers in unclassified list of seals in A.S.I.R. 1913-14.



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OBSERVATIONS ON THE VAIŚĀLĪ TERRACOTTAS

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The excavations carried on at Vaiśālī by T. Bloch in the year 1903-04 brought out a mass of materials including terracottas, pottery, clay-seals, coins etc. which together with the finds at Mathurā, Kauśāmbī, Buxar, Pāṭaliputra, Belwā (Saran) and Kasiā (Kuśinārā, Gorakhpur) supply us with a wealth of information about the life of the people in Northern India in the first four centuries of the Christian era. We choose here the terracottas for a study of the costume prevalent during the days of the Guptas and the four centuries before and after them. Little clay-toys burnt or otherwise give us a clue to the whole outlook of the people of those times. They are in many ways better records of the thoughts and aspirations of the people of the times than the overwhelming flood of philosophical treatises and literary compositions synchronistic with these terracottas.

An examination of these terracottas together with those found at Mathurā, Kauśāmbī, Buxar, Pāṭaliputra, Belwā (Saran), Kasiā (Kuśinārā, Gorakhpur) and the Didarganj image of the Mauryan age as well as the reliefs at Bhārhut of the following century reveals that in the matter of dress almost the same pattern was followed throughout Northern India all through the eight centuries beginning with the Mauryas (300B.C.-500A.D.): the head-dress and necklace, the waist-chain and the *dhoti* going round the waist with one end pressed by the chain behind and the other end hanging down in front between the thighs and legs up to the ankles and rings round the ankles; no cover for the portion of the body below the neck and about the waist; in case of males no cover for the thighs and legs; nothing for the arms except a broad chain round each of them against the armpit. This pattern stands bold in a contrast with what obtains to-day in our society and has been in vogue for the last eight hundred years at least beginning with the invasion of India by the Mussalmans from the west. The difference is especially marked in women's dress. It would be difficult for a North-Indian to-day to conceive of his women-folk without any cover for the part between the neck and the waist.

To reach an explanation of this pattern of costume, we have to look into the climatic conditions that must have obtained in North India during the centuries under discussion and the cultural level of the people who inhabited that long and wide territory then. There is no evidence of any marked topographical changes in North India during the last twenty-five hundred years. We can therefore safely assume that in the days of Vaiśālī terracottas, the climatic conditions were the same as they are today here. The Tropic of Cancer passing through the southern boundary line of the territory, for the greater part of the year, it has either excessively hot summer or mild hot spring and autumn and mild cold winter. Naturally therefore the necessity for cloths for protecting one's body from cold is not so great as it might be in the higher latitudes or on the mountain-heights. It is probably due to this fact that very few cloths were required as they are to-day to protect oneself from cold, but pro-

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tection from the elements has not been the sole consideration with Man in deciding the pattern of his garments. It may have been the most important factor there; but the factor next in importance has been his desire to look better, more attractive than he is. This desire to look more attractive seems to be the guiding factor in setting the pattern of dress as we cast a glance at the mass of Vaiśālī terracottas; for nowhere there is any attempt to cover the parts most vital and sensitive to cold, e.g., the chest which has within it the lungs and the heart. Man having settled down to agriculture did not have as many worries for his livelihood as in his primitive days, could give more time and attention to the searching for the ways and means for satisfying the demands of his sex, and he prepared a number of garments to decorate his head, the neck, the arms, the waist, the ankles and thus tried to have a sure place in the heart of a member of the the opposite sex. This is true of women as much as of man. Both vied with each other to look more attractive. Sex which manifested itself in an ugly form in the early and later medieval ages had already in the centuries preceding the medieval age established itself as a dominant factor in life and art of the times and shown unmistakable signs of its coming excesses in the medieval age in life and consequently in art both literary and plastic.

Even now we come across discussions claiming to be 'scientific' calling the times of the Guptas 'the Golden Age' of Indian History on the ground of political and artistic—both literary and plastic—achievements of the people. Belonging to the camp of those that find it extremely difficult to shake off the prejudice in favour of their people and their country, we cannot but exult in enumerating the long list of victories gained by Samudragupta of Pāṭaliputra on a hundred battle fields scattered over the whole of India over kings and their comrades that had claimed invincibility before the approach of the gallant armies of the Imperial Guptas. Petty chiefs and self-seeking rulers were all laid low throughout India and the country was given peace and order so that it might allow free scope for the development of the finer aspects of the life of its citizens. But all these stories of glorious achievements on the battlefields or the mass of gold coins of the Guptas unearthed over a wide area of the country do not give as authentic a picture of the common man in those days as these terracottas do. And what is the story they unfold for us about the life and work of this common man? Poor and helpless as always, he has to direct all his energies towards creating the stage on which to appear himself with the wife, the children, kinsmen and the comrades, singing and dancing all, playing on the *mṛidaṅga* and the *vīṇā*, in perfect glee as it were, for the recreation of the king, the Lord of the earth. Bereft of all the aspirations after perfections as set for the ideal of life in the philosophical treatises and literary compositions, what were all these myriads of unthinking human beings, reduced to the state of the apes, their ancestors, running to? What was it they were engaging themselves with? Was it love, enjoyment of life? Or was it coquetry of the most degrading type that led these masses of human beings devoid of even the primary moral susceptibilities, following recklessly their impulses, to the stage where they saw no way to save themselves from the foreign invaders other than to conceal themselves behind the long cloth placed over their heads and hanging down up to the toes or to silently surrender themselves to the enemy like the spineless creatures that they had become by then?

The material and the theme in the artistic representation of the life of the members of the royal family and that of the people almost invariably point to the great gulf that separated the people from the rulers, to the degraded position to which the common man was pushed down. The gold

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coin with the king as lion-slayer on the obverse and the queen riding the lion on the reverse—that was His Majesty the King with his consort as represented in art. The little clay images of men and women and children dancing and singing and beating the hide-bound faces of their wooden drums with straw-sticks for the recreation of the Royal Master—that was the average citizen in the Golden Age of Indian History.

The trouser and the coat which form the dress of the king, as represented on his gold coins of the lion-slayer type, are conspicuous by their absence in the Vaiśālī terracottas. The common man was not expected to indulge in acts of heroism and hence he never required a smart, tight dress consisting of a coat and trouser. He was mostly concerned with playing attendance to the king, and that job could be better performed with a loose, flowing garment than a close-fit suit convenient on the battle field or on the hunting ground. To-day we generally call the suit, consisting of coat and trouser, a European dress and believe that it was the Europeans who originally adopted this style of dress. While trying to assign a date and a place to a particular form of dress, we often forget its origin in the exigencies of function and climate. In the same climate we require a close-fit garment while engaged in manual work and a loose one while at home. In a cold climate a warm close-fit dress would be a necessity, not so in a different climate. Quite often the form varies according to the rank so that at home while the king would appear in gold-laced drapery, the poor attendant would do with a *dhoti* tied round the waist with one end flowing down up to the knees and a scarf wound round the head. The coat and trouser also might have something to do with the rank in the days of the Guptas as they have to do to-day.

In consideration of their causes, the coming of the veil is the same as the disappearance of the coat and trouser by the end of the twelfth century of the Christian era. For to ensure the security of the women, she had to be kept from the sight of the invaders; and the Indians having surrendered themselves to these invaders, who became rulers of the land, and given up all intention to organise themselves into a well-knit band of fighters for the freedom of the soil and rise up in revolt against the foreign usurpers, the smart and close-fit suit consisting of coat and trouser was no longer required. It is however to be borne in mind that the preparation of the coat and the trouser in the days of the Guptas was not the same as it is to-day. With all other things in human life as well as in Nature, the dress has taken its share in undergoing transformations in the process of evolution so that though the principle remains the same, performance varies according to variances in individual taste and national trends of thought and culture.

With regard to the veil which is absent from the Vaiśālī terracottas, we are presented with some difficulty by the passage केयमवगुण्ठनवती कन्या etc. in Kālidāsa's Abhijñānaśākuntalam, if of course we take Kālidāsa to belong to the age of the Guptas. If अवगुण्ठन is veil or cover for the face, it is in conflict with what we find in the terracottas of the period. We can get out of it only if we explain the fact as due to unsophisticated Śakuntalā's inability to bear the sight of the King in Majesty and hence an isolated, abnormal one having no social significance. Or in the face of the objective evidence in form of the terracottas and coins, we may summarily dismiss the subjective reference occurring in a literary composition whose form undergoes changes almost each time it changes hands, terms and expressions often leaving out their original meanings and taking on new ones. Under such circumstances, we may not even be sure if अवगुण्ठन means the cover for the face.

We have deliberately kept from discussing the date of the Vaiśālī terracottas. We refer the reader

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for discussions of the same to the articles of T. Bloch and D. B. Spooner in the Archaeological Survey of India Annual Reports for 1903-04 and 1913-14. The palaeography of the inscriptions on the coins and the seals as well as the strata in which the terracottas have been found point definitely to the period 300 A.D. -500 A.D. as their date. It has been deduced from the coins and the seals that Vaiśālī was the seat of the governor of the province of Tīrabhukti (Modern Tirhut) under the Imperial Guptas.

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VAIŚĀLĪ AND GAUTAMA BUDDHA

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"Deity of the ruined temple! The broken strings of the 'vīṇā' sing no more your praise. The bells in the evening proclaim not your time of worship. The air is still and silent about you. In your desolate dwelling comes the vagrant spring breeze. It brings the tidings of flowers—the flowers that for your worship are offered no more."

Indeed, all things rush on. They stop not to look behind: they rush on. The world is so fleeting. Change is the rule of nature, the order of the universe. The glorious days of Vaiśālī are things of the past. She lies in neglect and desolation. One could envy the glory that was Vaiśālī, but one would perhaps even refuse to pity what remains of her.

Relics of her shining period of history lay scattered and buried near "Rājā Bisāl-kā-Garh" in the village of Basāṛh. The spirit of ancient Vaiśālī still hovers over them. Alas, if one could worship that deity of the past!

This is history. Where one does not care now to give even a visit to modern Basāṛh, in the ages long past, no less a personality than the great Tathāgata, the Buddha, could not help giving a sigh, while he was leaving Vaiśāli never to return again. Simple are the words of the Enlightened One, when he said to Ananda: "इदं पच्छिमकं आनन्द! तथागतस्स वेसालि दस्सनं भविस्सति" Casting a longing and lingering look behind, over the charming splendour and serenity of the city, he really felt moved at the final parting. These words bear witness to his feelings. How potent and tender are they! What a pregnant and appealing suggestion they make! The radiant and soft smile, with which the Sun bids us adieu in the annals of our day-to-day life, is a thing which we remember and forget till the occasion repeats itself; but these words of the Amitābha can never be forgotten in a history of Vaiśālī and her relations with the Buddha. Such an intimate association it was! Such a fond love lay between them!

* * *

Legends and traditions cannot be facts and history. They weave out such a weird atmosphere around facts that at times it becomes rather impossible to single out the kernel of truth. However, they give suggestions. The modern historian of ancient India is another speculator to give vent to his imagination over such suggestions and thereby shape out a structure of things which look like history. But here we must be cautious about our judgment. The purpose which the modern historian is to serve, the sincerity with which he approaches, and the methods, such as comparison and elimination, analysis and systematisation, which he employs, do not allow the picture drawn by him to be polluted by ugly spots of vain fanciful indulgences.

The story of the foundation of Vaiśālī is an addition to imaginative speculation, which is very often vain and ludicrous, in which some of the writers of ancient India, casting a side-glance over facts and traditions, tried to indulge. Buddhaghosha provides an interesting

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story in Paramatthajotikā for the origin of the Lichchhavis and the foundation of Vaiśālī. It is said that once the chief queen of the king of Benares delivered a lump of flesh, when a son "resplendent like gold" was expected of her. To avoid the displeasure of the king the ladies-in-waiting managed somehow to get it sealed in a casket and thrown into the Ganges. A god, wishing to provide for its safety, wrote with a piece of cinnabar on a slip of gold the words 'The child of the chief queen of the king of Benares', tied it to the casket, and replaced it in the river It was picked up by an ascetic thinking it to contain rags. But finding it otherwise, the ascetic took it to his hermitage and carefully tended the embryo, which in due course of time gave forth two children—a body and a girl. The ascetic was filled with paternal affection and milk began pouring from his thumb. Whatever reached the stomach of the children could be seen as if put into a vessel of precious transparent stone, so that they appeared to have no skin (Nicchavi) or to have thin skin (Līnāchavi). Thus the children came to be called Lichchhavis. The villagers living near the hermitage, having realised the difficulties of the ascetic in nursing the children, offered their services to bring them up. The ascetic assented and handed over the two infants with these words: "The children are possessed of great virtue and goodness; bring them up with great care, and when they are grown up, marry them together. Please the king and getting a piece of land, measure out a city, and instal the prince there." The villagers agreed. The village boys disliked them, for these two children harassed and troubled them and hence it was said they were avoided (Vajjitabbā). When they were sixteen years of age, the villagers married them and obtained land from the king, wherein the boy was anointed King. The country came to be known as Vajji and the capital city founded by them as Vesāli, for, as the family grew rapidly, the city was again and again made larger and still larger.

The Ceylonese Buddhist work, *Pūjāvaliya*, also gives a similar account.

In Chapter XLVII of Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa* we are told that the city of Vaiśālī, called Viśālā, was founded by Viśāla, a son of king Ikshvāku and the Apsarā Alambuṣā. The *Vishṇupurāṇa*, however, makes Viśāla, a son of Tṛiṇabindu by Alambuṣā. Whatever may be the truth in connecting Viśāla with Viśālā, in the very suggestion that Vaiśālī was known as Viśālā we get an idea of the extensive area of the city of Vaiśālī, which has also been referred to in the above account given by Buddhaghosha.

In Hiuen Tsang we get a further support for the largeness of the city of Vaiśālī, nay, he actually gives a measurement of it. He says the foundations of the old city of Vaiśālī were sixty or seventy li in circuit and the palace city (i.e., the walled part of the city) was four or five li in circuit.

In the *Ekapaṇṇa Jātaka* we are told, "At the time of Buddha the city of Vesāli was encompassed by three walls at a distance of a 'gāvyuta' from one another and that at three places there were gates with watch-towers and buildings."

The Tibetan *Dulva* also gives an account of Vaiśālī. It says, "There were three districts in Vaiśālī. In the first district were seven thousand houses with golden towers, in the middle district fourteen thousand houses with silver towers, and in the last district were twenty-one thousand houses with copper towers; in these lived the upper, the middle and lower classes according to their positions."

Hoernle in his English translation of *Uvāsagadasāo* identifies these three districts mentioned in the *Dulva* with Vesāli proper, Kuṇḍapura and Vāṇiyagāma. And, as Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson

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would have us believe, these three represented the priestly (Brāhmaṇa), the warrior (Kṣatriya) and the commercial (Baniyā) communities.

From what has already been said, it is reasonable to believe that, at least in the time of Buddha, Vaiśālī was a large and flourishing city, fortified by walls with watch-gates. It was the capital of the strong clan of the Saṁvajjis. The populace which consisted mostly of the Lichchhavis was rich and prosperous with ample resources in food and luxuries. The Lichchhavis themselves, a united strong Kṣatriya clan of the then India, were handsome in features, colourful in attire and energetic in action. The Buddha once compared them to the Tāvatiṁsa gods. The city of Vaiśālī was a beauteous spot in this earth full of decent parks and pleasant lotus ponds. The Buddha once remarked: "How beautiful, Ānanda, is the city of Vesāli, the land of the Vajjis." Verily it was regarded as heavenly. Outside the town, leading uninterruptedly up to the Himālaya, was the Mahāvana, a large, natural forest. Nearby were other forests, such as Gosiṅgalasāla.

Vaiśālī was a sort of a city-state, the likeness of which we find in ancient Greek history. It should not be called a completely republican state, for the franchise was limited only to the seven thousand seven hundred and seven Rājās.

In the sixth century B.C., the cauldron of anti-Brāhmaṇic feeling was boiling hot and Śramaṇic thoughts were raising their heads in Northern India from Kośala in the west to Aṅga in the East. Vaiśālī, then, together with other cities like Pāṭaliputra, Rājagṛiha and Śrāvasti, was fast becoming a centre of such activities as helped the rise and growth of two of the most protagonistic sects of the Śramaṇic culture, i.e., Jainism and Buddhism.

Vaiśālī was already a stronghold of Jainism which is also called the sect of the Nigaṇṭhas. It is said that of the forty-two rainy seasons of the latter part of Mahāvīra's ascetic life, he passed twelve at Vesāli. The fact that Mahāvīra himself was related to Vaiśālī cannot in any case be overlooked. The influence of the Nigaṇṭha leader, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, can very well be seen in the fact that when Saccaka, one of his followers, visited the Buddha at Mahāvana, he was accompanied by five hundred Lichchhavis, who did not all salute the Buddha as their teacher, but showed him only such respect as was due to an honoured stranger.

Indeed, the Buddha's presence in Vesāli was a source of discomfort to the Nigaṇṭhas and we find mention of various devices resorted to by them to prevent their followers from comimg under the influence of the Buddha.

As regards the relation of the Buddha with the city of the Lichchhavis, we first note a reference in the *Lalitavistāra*, wherein we find that some of the Devas of Tushitaloka request the Bodhisatta to take his birth in Vaiśālī, although the request was not granted owing to some weighty reasons.

But the first great visit to Vaiśālī of the Buddha was made five years after the Great Enlightenment when he spent the *vassā* there.

We are informed by the Buddhist sources (e.g., *Mahāvāstu*) that, owing to drought, a famine ravaged the city of Vaiśālī to such an extent that people died in large numbers. The smell of the decaying bodies attracted evil spirits, and many inhabitants were attacked by intestinal disease. The people complained of it in a general assembly convoked by them. The assembly, after much discussion, decided to invite the Buddha to their city. At that time the lord was in Veḷuvana in Rājagaha. The Lichchhavi Mahāli, a friend of Bimbisāra and son of the chaplain of Vesāli, was sent for this purpose. The Buddha accepted the invitation. He started with five hundred Bhikkhus.

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Bimbisāra decorated the route from Rājagaha to the Ganges, a distance of five leagues, and provided all comforts on the way. He himself accompanied the Buddha up to the Ganges. They reached the Ganges in five days. Boats decked with great splendour were ready for the Buddha and his monks. The king of Magadha even followed the Buddha into the water up to his neck to give him his respectful farewell. On the yonder banks, the Lichchhavis were ready to pay obeisance to their Redeemer. The Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī decorated their roads with a magnificence that left the Haryaṅka king of Magadha far behind in preparations. As soon as the Buddha set foot in the Vajjian territory, there was a thunderstorm and rain fell in torrents.

The distance from the Ganges to Vesāli was three leagues. When the Sugata approached the city, Sakka, chief of the Devas, came to greet him and at the sight of the Devas, all the malign influences that hung over the country vanished and the evil spirits that worked havoc with the people of Vaiśālī fled in fear. In the evening the Enlightened One taught Ānanda the Ratana Sutta, and ordered that it should be recited within the three walls of the city. This was performed by Ānanda during the three watches of the night and all the pestilences of the citizens disappeared. The Tathāgata himself recited the Ratana Sutta to the assembled people and eighty-four thousand persons were converted. After seven days Buddha left Vesāli. The Lichchhavis accompanied him to the Ganges with redoubled honours. On the farther bank Bimbisāra awaited his arrival and conducted him back to Rājagaha.

It was probably during this visit of the Buddha to Vesāli that Śuddhodana died. According to one account, the Buddha went through the air to visit his dying father and to preach to him and thereby enabling him to attain arahantship before his death.

Thus already we see that the city of Vaiśālī was hallowed by the happy light of the Great Amitābha even early in his career.

The closeness of his association with Vaiśālī and his great familiarity with Lichchhavi institutions is clear from another account. There was a port on the Ganges, extending over one *yojana*, half of which territory belonged to Ajātaśatru, and the other half to the Lichchhavis. Near by was a mountain, from which much fragrant material flowed into the river. While Ajātaśatru was making preparations to claim his portion of this material, the Lichchhavis would go before him and remove it all. This happened on several occasions and Ajātaśatru vowed vengeance. He ordered the construction of a city-fort on the banks of the Ganges near Pāṭaligrāma and sent his minister, Vassakāra, to the Buddha in order to learn from him the chances of his success. The Buddha enquired from his disciple Ānanda, whether the Vajjis practised the seven points taught by him (i.e. Buddha) at the Sārandada Cetiya: that is, whether they held frequent public meetings of their tribe which they all attended; whether they met together to make their decisions and carried out their undertakings in concord; whether they upheld tradition and honoured their pledges; whether they respected and supported their elders; whether no women or girls were allowed to be taken by force or abducted; whether they maintained and paid due respect to their places of worship; and, whether they supported and fully protected the holy men (*arahants*) among them. When the Buddha was informed in the affirmative, he told the Magadha minister Vassakāra that so long as these seven अपरिहानिया धम्मा were followed, it was next to impossible to achieve success against the Vajjis.

For its security a state needs to be informed of the different activities of at least the neighbour-

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ing countries. Before the accession of Ajātaśatru, the empire of Magadha, under the rule of Bimbisāra, had already developed into a consolidated state and Magadha had already formed relations with the Lichchhavis. Why is it that Ajātaśatru and his able ministers, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, could not have enough knowledge of the workings of the Lichchhavi mind? Why is it that for the knowledge of the internal condition of the Vajjis they needed the help, not of a fifth-columnist, not of a disgruntled Lichchhavi officer, but of no less a great force in religion than Tathāgata the Buddha? The reason is obvious. The ministers and the king might be knowing, no doubt, the external structure of the Vajjian confederacy, nay, they might have even harboured a vague idea of their unity and concord. But to know the real state of affairs it became necessary for these statesmen to consult the Buddha, who must have been in close contact and on familiar terms with the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī.

Again, in *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the Buddha says: "Look ye Bhikkhus here, how these Lichchhavis live sleeping with logs of wood as pillows, strenuous and diligent (*appamattā*), zealous and active (*ātāpino*) in archery. Ajātasattu Vedehiputto, the Magadhan king, can find no defect in them, nor can he discover any cause of action (against them)".

It is very difficult to say how many times the Buddha visited Vaiśālī. But we know from the Buddhist texts that many of the important *suttas* were preached at Vesāli. To name some of them, they are *Mahāli, Mahāsīhanāda, Cūlasaccaka, Mahāsaccaka, Tevijja, Vacchagotta, Sunakkhatta* and *Ratana*. And it is in these *suttas* that we find many interesting accounts of the different sojourns of the Buddha.

The Lichchhavis who wanted that the Buddha might be induced to stay in their city, built the Kūṭāgāraśālā and offered it to him and the Saṁgha. Once the Lichchhavis heard that the Enlightened One had repaired to Cāpāla-Caitya for spending a day and so they made a present of it to him and the Saṁgha. Similarly, the Saptāmra-Caitya, the Bahuputra-Caitya, the Gautama-Caitya Kapinahya-Caitya and the Markaṭa-hrada-tīra-Caitya were made gifts to the Buddha and his church. The famous courtezan Ambapālī of Vaiśālī also made a gift of her extensive mango-grove to the congregation and similarly Bālikā made over Bālikāchhavi which is probably the same as the Bālikārāma of the Pali Buddhist books.

Many important and far-reaching decisions affecting the Dhaṁma and Saṁgha of the Buddha were made at Vaiśālī.

The Mahāvagga informs us of an occasion when the Buddha saw some Bhikkhus of Vaiśālī with superfluous Cīvaras, 'almost smothered up in robes', going along with their robes made up into a roll on their heads, on their backs and on their waists. Then the Buddha testing the severest winter nights by means of personal experience, fixed the maximum number of robes to be used by the Bhikkhus, i.e., one doubled Sanghāti, one single Uttarāsaṅga and one single Antarvāsaka.

The Cullavagga speaks of another occasion when the Buddha was staying in the Kūṭāgāra Vihāra in the Mahāvana. There the water was unfit for drinking purposes and hence the Buddha permitted the use of strainers and filters for the Bhikkhus. The Buddha also taught the Bhikkhus many matters connected with "nava kamma" of the Vihāras. He also taught them what sort of houses they were to build and live in.

It is here again in Vaiśālī that one very important and momentous decision was taken which though on the one hand it gave a right to the fair sex to get emancipation in the Dhaṁma of the

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Enlightened, on the other hand, it signalled the coming of that notorious event in the history of a religion which sounds the death-knell of its organisation. Buddha received a deputation of Sākya ladies headed by Mahāpajāpati Gotamī. At long last permission was given to them, after a good deal of persuasion from Ānanda, by the Buddha, for their entrance into the Saṁgha. The womenfolk came into the Saṁgha, but they limited the age of the Saṁgha to five hundred years, which might have extended to one thousand.

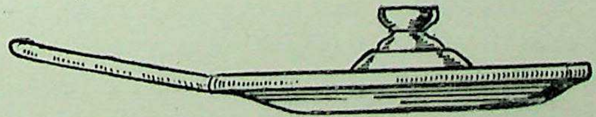
No history of Vaiśālī can be complete without mentioning Ambapālī. She was no doubt a courtezan, but Vaiśālī was proud of her ; nay, it is said, the prosperity and happiness that came to mark Vaiśāli was enhanced to a great degree by this courtezan. Her ravishing beauty bewitched Bimbisāra, but her simplicity and sincerity in the Dhaṁma of the Buddha made her attain the highest stage of perfection. She felt proud of her luck when the Buddha agreed to take food at her place and accepted the gift of the mango-grove; and she drove her chariot neck to neck with the chariots of the Lichchhavi Rājaputtas.

According to the Buddhist books, the Lichchhavis were devout followers of the Buddha and held him in the highest esteem. Even careless boys wandering about with hounds and bows and arrows, and about whom even the elder Mahānāma complained, would lay aside their arms when they saw the Buddha seated under a tree and would surround him with folded hands, eager to listen to him.

It appears thus that the whole of Vaiśālī was under the influence of the magnetic personality of the Buddha. From the king in the palace to the beggar in the street, from the most serious man of the time to the notorious boys of the field all listened to him in reverence and paid their worshipful obeisance. The impress that they made in the heart of the Buddha himself was not effaced by time and place and the Tathāgata always remembered them, so much so, that while proceeding to Kusinārā to attain the Mahāparinibbāṇa, he gave an elephant-like look behind to Vaiśāli. The people of Vaiśālī also gave evidence of their love and affection, respect and reverence, by enshrining a portion of the sacred relics of the Buddha in their city.

The soothing soft rays of the Amitābha are withdrawn from Vaiśālī, and she lies in darkness. The flourishing life of Vaiśālī is buried with the relics of the Tathāgata and she lies lifeless in ruins.

"The dew is on the lotus,
Rise, O great Sun."



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VAIŚĀLĪ IN GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS

PROF. YOGENDRA MISHRA, M.A., SAHITYARATNA

In 1931 several Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts were discovered in a stupa near Gilgit. It was a chance discovery made by a cowboy. The Government of Kashmir and Jammu took charge of the manuscripts and are arranging the publication of these "Gilgit Manuscripts." Parts of them have been published and the remaining ones will be published in due course. They are being edited by Dr. Nalinaksha Dutt, Ph.D., D. Litt, and Vidyavaridhi Pt. Shiva Nath Sharma, Sastri, D. O. C.

The manuscripts were written in Gupta characters of the 5th or 6th century A. D. and as such they are some of the earliest so far discovered in India, similar to the Bower manuscripts and to those discovered in Central Asia and Eastern Turkestan. Most of the manuscripts were known to us only through their Chinese and Tibetan translations and no one dreamt of the discovery of their Sanskrit originals.

The language of the manuscripts is similar to that of the *Mahāvastu*, *Lalitavistara* and other works. In a general way we may remark that the language of the early Mahāyāna texts is really a Prakrit of a peculiar type. In the language of the "Gilgit Manuscripts" we find endless examples of irregularities. There are several instances which distinctly prove that the compiler worked on a Prakrit original and found difficulty in Sanskritising the Prakrit words.

Vaiśālī, which occupies so prominent a place in Buddhism, is mentioned in the Gilgit Manuscripts on several occasions. Indeed the scene of many *Sūtras* is located there. A particular section of the text (i.e., the first section of the Chīvaravastu in the Vinaya Texts of the Mūlasarvāstivādas published in Gilgit Manuscripts, Volume III, Part 2, pp. 1 - 52) throws interesting light on the life and culture of the Lichchhavis of the 6 th century B. C. The importance of this particular section has been ably pointed out by Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M. A., Ph.D, P. R. S. in his article entitled 'Historical Materials in Gilgit Manuscripts' published in B. C. Law Volume, Part I, pp. 134 - 141.

Below we propose to collect together the important references to Vaiśālī in the Gilgit Manuscripts and consider their significance.

The scene of the first Sūtra of the very first volume of Gilgit Manuscripts is laid at Vaiśālī. The Buddha arrives at the great city of Vaiśālī (*Vaiśālīm mahānagarīm*); he is surrounded by all the beings of the worlds. Mañjuśrīkumāra stands up and requests the Tathāgata to give an exposition of the vows made formerly by the past Buddhas for rescuing the living beings from the miseries of existence. Bhagavā grants the request and explains the twelve vows taken formerly.

As has already been mentioned the first 52 pages of the Chīvaravastu published in the Second Part of the Third Volume of the Gilgit Manuscripts are devoted to the history of the Lichchhavis and their relations with contemporary powers.

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The first story is that of the marriage of Bimbisāra with Chelā. She was the elder daughter of Siṁha, the commander-in-chief (*Senāpati*) of the Lichchhavis and niece of Gopa, the chief minister of Bimbisāra. Gopa and Siṁha were the two sons of Khaṇḍa, who was at first the chief minister of the king of Videha, but on finding his fellow ministers envious of him for his abilities, resigned his ministership and became the *Senāpati* of the Lichchhavis (pp. 1-15).

The second story is that of the foundling Āmrapālī, who was adopted as a daughter by a Lichchhavi nobleman called Mahāhāma. Āmrapālī became a courtezan and came into contact with Bimbisāra. To her was born a son, who came to be known as Abhaya (pp. 16-22).

In connection with the above two stories, interesting light is thrown on the political and social customs of the Lichchhavis.

The third story is that of Jīvaka (pp. 23-48). In pages 49 -52 is related the incident of Bimbisāra's mistaking an Ājīvaka for a Bhikshu, which led Buddha to devise a special dress (chīvara) for the Buddhist monks.

In the Chīvaravastu, we find other references as well to Vaiśālī (pp. 87-89). Buddha passes on to this place where he admonishes the monks to keep their articles of use clean (pp. 87-89). While at Vaiśāli, he refers to a monk who had misappropriated the property of the Saingha in his previous lives and as a result had suffered long. This story is followed by certain directions regarding seats, bed-covers, bandages, and segregation of monks suffering from leprosy (p. 91).

The monks of Vaiśālī are mentioned on page 120 (text) as well.

A quarrel between the monks of Vaiśālī and Kauśāmbī is related in the Kośambaka-vastu published in the same volume (i.e. Volume III, Part 2).

No important references to Vaiśālī are found either in Vol. II or Vol. III Pt. 3.

Of all the published portions of the Gilgit Manuscripts, the first section of the Chīvaravastu (Vol. III, Pt, 2, pp. 1-52, especially pp. 1-22) is by far the most important from our point of view. This section has been summarised and its significance brought forth by Dr. R. C. Majumdar. Hence, we shall be contented to point out certain important things relating to the Lichchhavis and their capital, as revealed in the texts. Our observations are based on the article of Dr. Majumdar which is gratefully acknowledged.

We get in the texts a vivid contrast between the republican and the monarchical forms of government, the former being called *gaṇādhīna*, and the latter *ekādhīna* (p. 5). The context in which Khaṇḍa makes the contrast leaves no doubt about the true democratic spirit which animated the citizens of Vaiśālī. Every important matter was discussed in the assembly and 'what was desired by ten was opposed by twenty.' Discussion formed an important feature in the working of the assembly. Even the question of marrying his daughter was placed by Mahānāma before the assembly. The executive authorities were controlled by the assembly even in minute details.

The Senāpati was the head of the state. Siṁha was elected to this post by the assembly, and we must presume the same procedure in the case of Khaṇḍa though the election by the assembly is not specifically referred to.

This democratic constitution, however, did not mean social equality. The division of the capital-city of Vaiśālī into three residential quarters based on wealth, and the restriction of marriage between equals in each quarter (pp. 6-7) prove clearly the existence of class distinctions of a fairly rigid character. But that even a foreigner like Khaṇḍa and the courtezan Āmrapālī were assigned residences in the highest quarter shows the flexibility of the social rules.

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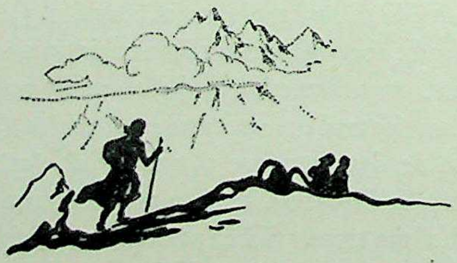
The convention, actually put into practice by the *gaṇa* in the case of Āmrapālī, that the most accomplished woman (or women) in the city of Vaiśālī (*Vaiśālīstrīratna*) should not be married but remain an object of enjoyment by the *gaṇa* as a whole (*gaṇasāmānyaṁ paribhojyameva*, p. 7 of the text), throws an altogether new light on the social and moral ideas of the age. It is interesting to note that in the Pāli Vinaya texts, a pointed reference is made to the courtezan Āmrapālī as having added lustre and distinction to the city of Vaiśālī (Cp. "Through that person Vesāli became more and more flourishing." Mahāvagga VII. 1,1). What is more, in order that Rājagṛiha might not lag behind Vaiśālī, a similar courtesan is installed there with the consent of king Bimbisāra.

The general political history of North-Eastern India, envisaged in the text, is also not without interest. In addition to Prasenajit, king of Kosala with his capital at Śrāvastī, and Bimbisāra, king of Magadha with his capital at Rājagṛiha, to both of whom frequent references are made, mention is made of the kings Pradyota and Udayana, kingdoms of Videha, Vārāṇasī and Champā, and the tribal states of Śākya and Krauñcha. Thus it presents the political condition such as we find in other Buddhist canonical texts. It evidently refers to the period before Aṅga and Kāśī were conquered respectively by Bimbisāra and Prasenajit.

The mention of Videha as a kingdom is important. Rhys Davids includes Videha among the tribal republics and translates the epithet Vedehiputta, applied to Ajātaśatru, as the son of the queen of the Videha clan (S.B.E., Vol. XI, p. 134). Both these views are opposed to the testimony of the present text. For, apart from the mention of Videha as a kingdom, it is clearly said that Ajātaśatru's mother was not a queen of Videha but the daughter of a citizen of Vaiśālī, and she was called Vaidehī as she was brought from Videha country.

The King of Videha is said to have five hundred *amātyas* with Khaṇḍa as the chief or *agrāmātya*. This post of *agrāmātya* is also mentioned in connection with the kingdoms of Magadha and Kosala, though there is no mention of five hundred *amātyas* in either case. Whether the body of five hundred *amātyas* denotes a sort of deliberative assembly cannot be determined. But although its exact nature cannot be defined it seems to be an interesting feature of the government.



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THE SECOND BUDDHIST COUNCIL OF VAIŚĀLĪ[1]

Translated by DR. WILHELM GEIGER, PH.D.

At the end of the tenth year of the reign of Kālāsoka [son of Susunāga] a century had gone by since the parinibbāṇa of the Sambuddha.

At that time in Vesālī many bhikkhus of the Vajji-clan did shamelessly teach that the Ten Points[2] were lawful, namely :—

(1) 'Salt in the horn',
(2) 'Two fingers' breadth',
(3) 'Visiting the village',
(4) 'Dwelling',
(5) 'Consent',
(6) 'Example',
(7) 'Unchurned milk',
(8) 'Unfermented palm-wine',
(9) 'Seat without fringe',
(10) 'Gold and so forth'.

When this came to the ears of the thera Yasa, the son of the brahman Kākaṇḍaka, gifted with the six supernormal powers, who was wandering about in the Vajji country, he betook himself to the Mahāvana (vihāra) with the resolve to settle the matter. In the uposatha-hall those (monks) had placed a vessel made of metal and filled with water and had said to the lay-folk: 'Bestow on the

[1] Our main sources of information for the history of the Second Council held at Vaiśālī are the *Cullavagga* of the Vinaya Piṭaka and the *Vinayakṣudrakavastu*, the Tibetan translation of the *Mūla-Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*, which forms also the basis of Buston's and Tārānātha's accounts of the council, as also of Rockhill. The Ceylonese chronicles (i.e., the Dīpavaṃsa and the Mahāvaṃsa) and Pāli commentaries derive their information mainly from the Cullavagga. The account of Yuan Chwang is also useful. Besides the above accounts derived from the Vinaya texts, there are three other texts written by Bhavya, Vasumitra and Vinītadeva on the history of the Buddhist schools. There are references to the session of the council in the *Mahāvastu*, *Samādhirāja*, *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* and other later texts. The account of the Council given here is according to the Mahāvaṃsa which has been translated into English by Dr. Geiger. [Ed.]

[2] The Ten Points are explained below:—

(*i*) Carrying salt in a horn vessel, in order to season unsalted foods, when received. This contravened according to one view the rule against the storing of articles of food.
(*ii*) Taking food after midday, lit. when the shadow of the sun had passed two fingers' breadth beyond noon.
(*iii*) Going to a neighbouring village and taking a second meal there the same day if invited, committing thereby the offence of over-eating.
(*iv*) Holding the uposatha-feast separately by monks dwelling in the same district.
(*v*) The carrying out of official acts by an incomplete chapter, on the supposition that the consent of absent bhikkhus was obtained afterwards.
(*vi*) The following of a practice because it is so done by one's tutor or teacher.
(*vii*) Taking unchurned milk, even after the meal-time.
(*viii*) Drinking unfermented palm-wine.
(*ix*) The use of mats to sit on which were not of the prescribed size, if they were without fringe.
(*x*) Accepting gold and silver. [Ed.]

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brotherhood kahāpaṇas[1] and so on'. The thera forbade them with the words 'This is unlawful; give nothing!' Then did they threaten the thera Yasa with the penance called the Craving of pardon from lay-folk. He asked for one to bear him company and went with him into the city proclaiming to the citizens, that his teaching was according to the dhamma.

When the bhikkhus heard what (Yasa's) companion had to tell, they came to thrust him out and surrounded the thera's horse. The thera left it, rising up and passing through the air, and halting at Kosambī, he forthwith sent messengers to the bhikkhus of Pāvā and Avanti; he himself went to the Ahogaṅga-mountain and related all to the thera Saṃbhūta Sāṇavāsi.

Sixty great theras from Pāvā and eighty from Avanti, all free from the āsavas, came together on the Ahogaṅga. The bhikkus who met together here from this and that region were in all ninety thousand. When they had all conferred together they, knowing that the deeply learned thera Revata of Soreyya who was free from the āsavas, was the chief among them at that time, went thence to seek him out.

When the thera heard this resolution (by his divine ear) he set out at once, wishing to travel easily, upon the way to Vesālī. Arriving day by day in the evening at the spot whence the sage had departed in the morning (the theras) met him (at last) at Sahajāti.

There the thera Yasa, as the thera Saṁbhūta had charged him to do, at the end of the recital of the sacred word, addressing himself to the great thera Revata, questioned him on the Ten Points. The thera rejected them, and when he had heard the matter, he said, 'Let us make an end (of this dispute)'.

The heretical bhikkhus, too, in order to win support, sought the thera Revata. Preparing in abundance the things needful for ascetics, they took ship with all speed and went to Sahajāti, bestowing food sumptuously when the mealtime came.

The thera Sāḷha, free from the āsavas, who lived at Sahajāti, having thought on the matter, perceived: 'Those of Pāvā hold the true doctrine.' And the great good Brahmā drew near to him and said: 'Stand thou firm in the doctrine,' and he replied that he would ever stand firm in the doctrine.

They (i.e. the Vajjian monks) took those needful things (that they had brought as gifts) and sought the thera Revata, but the thera did not take their part and dismissed (the pupil) who took their part. They went thence to Vesālī, shameless they went from there to Pupphapura (Puṣpapura or Pāṭaliputra), and told king Kālāsoka: 'Guarding our Master's performed chamber we dwell in the Mahāvana-vihāra in the Vajji territory; but bhikkhus dwelling in the country are coming, great king, with the thought: We will take the vihāra for ourselves. Forbid them!'

When they had thus misled the king they went (back) to Vesālī.

Here in Sahajāti eleven hundred and ninety thousand bhikkhus were come together under the thera Revata, to bring the dispute to a peaceful end. And the thera would not end the dispute save in the presence of those with whom it had begun; therefore all the bhikkhus went thence to Vesālī.

The misguided king likewise sent his ministers thither, but led astray by the design of the devas they went elsewhere. And the monarch, when he had sent them, saw himself in a dream, that night, hurled into the hell called Lohakumbhī. The king was sorely terrified and, to calm his fears, his sister, Nandā, the therī free from the āsavas, came to him passing through the air.

[1] A square copper coin (Skr. kārṣāpaṇa).

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'An ill deed is this that thou hast done'! Reconcile thee with these venerable bhikkhus, the true believers. Placing thyself on their side, protect thou their faith. If thou dost so, blessed art thou!' she said, and thereon vanished. And forwith in the morning the king set out to go to Vesālī.

He went to the Mahāvana (monastery), assembled the congregation of the bhikkhus there, and when he had heard what was said by both of the (opposing) sides, and had decided, himself, for the true faith, when moreover this prince was reconciled with all the rightly believing bhikkhus and had declared that he was for the right belief, he said: 'Do what ye think well to further the doctrine,' and when he had promised to be their protector, he returned to his capital.

Thereafter the brotherhood came together to decide upon those points; then, in the congregation (of monks), aimless words were spent. Then the thera Revata, who went into the midst of the brotherhood, resolved to settle the matter by means of an ubbāhikā.[1] He appointed four bhikkhus from the East, and four from Pāvā, for the ubbāhikā to set the dispute to rest. Sabbakāmi and Sāḷha, one named Khujjasobhita, and Vāsabhagāmika, these were the theras from the East; Revata, Sāṇasaṃbhūta, Yasa, the son of Kākaṇḍaka, and Sumana, these were the four theras from Pāvā.

Now to decide on those points the eight theras who were free from the āsavas betook them to the quiet and solitary Vālikārāma. There, in the beautiful spot prepared for them by the young Ajita, the great theras took up their abode, they who knew the thoughts of the Greatest of Sages. And the great thera Revata, skilled in questioning, questioned the thera Sabbakāmi successively on each one of those points. Questioned by him the great thera Sabbakāmi thus gave judgment: 'All these points are unlawful, according to tradition.' And when, in due order, they had ended (their task) in this place, they did all again, in like manner, with question and answer, in the presence of the brotherhood. And thus did the great theras refute the teaching of those ten thousand heretical bhikkhus who maintained the Ten Points.

Sabbakāmi was then the saṃghatthera on the earth, one hundred and twenty years did he number since his upasampadā.

Sabbakāmi and Sāḷha, Revata, Khujjasobhita, Yasa, the son of Kākaṇḍaka, and Sambhūta Sāṇavāsika, the six theras, were pupils of the thera Ānanda; but Vāsabhagāmika and Sumana, the two theras, were pupils of the thera Anuruddha. These eight fortunate theras had beheld the Tathāgata in time past. One hundred and twelve thousand bhikkhus had come together, and of all these bhikkhus the thera Revata then was the chief.

At that time the thera Revata, in order to hold a council, that the true faith might long endure, chose seven hundred out of all that troop of bhikkhus; (those chosen were) arahants endowed with the four special sciences, understanding of meanings and so forth, knowing the tipiṭaka.

All these (theras met) in the Vālikārāma protected by Kālāsoka, under the leadership of the thera Revata, (and) compiled the dhamma. Since they accepted the dhamma already established in time past and proclaimed afterward, they completed their work in eight months.

When these theras of high renown had held the Second Council, they, since in them all evil had perished, attained in course of time unto nibbāṇa.

[1] Ubbāhikāya 'by means of a *Referat*', the settlement of a dispute being laid in the hands of certain chosen brethren.

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FA-HIAN'S TRAVELS IN THE VAIŚĀLĪ REGION

Translated by Mr. Samuel Beal, b.a.

[1. Where Buddha left the Lichchhavis]

Going south-east twelve *yojanas* from this place [i.e. Kusinagara], we arrive at the spot[1] where the Lichchhavis, desiring to follow Buddha to the scene of his *Nirvāṇa*, were forbidden to do so. On account of their affection for Buddha they were unwilling to go back, on which Buddha caused to appear between them and him a great and deeply-scarped river, which they could not cross. He then left with them his alms-bowl as a memorial, and exhorted them to return to their houses. On this they went back and erected a stone pillar, on which this account is engraved.

[11. Vaiśālī]

From this going five *yojanas* eastward, we arrive at the country of Vaiśālī.

To the north of the city of Vaiśālī there is the vihāra of the great forest, which has a two- storied tower. This chapel was once occupied by Buddha.

Here also is the tower which was built over half the body of Ānanda.

Within this city dwelt the lady Āmrapālī (who built) a tower for Buddha; the ruins still exist.

Three *li* to the south of the city, on the west side of the road is the garden which the lady Āmrapālī gave to Buddha as a resting-place.

When Buddha was about to enter *Nirvāṇa*, accompanied by his disciples, he left Vaiśālī by the western gate, and turning his body to the right, he beheld the city and thus addressed his followers: "In this place I have performed the last religious act of my earthly career." Men afterwards raised a tower on this spot.

Three *li* to the north-west of the city is a tower called "the tower of the deposited bows and clubs." The origin of this name was as follows:—

On one of the upper streams of the Ganges there was a certain country ruled by a king. One of his concubines gave birth to an unformed fœtus whereupon the queen being jealous, said, "Your conception is one of bad omen." So they closed it up in a box of wood and cast it into the Ganges. Lower down the stream there was another king, who, taking a tour of observation, caught sight of the wooden box floating on the stream. On bringing it to shore and opening it, he found inside a thousand children very fair, well formed, and most

[1] Cunningham identifies this place with Kesariyā (Champaran District) situated about 30 miles north-west of Basāṛh, the site of old Vaiśālī. Dr. Bloch accepts this identification. [Ed.]

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unique. The king hereupon took them and brought them up. When they grew up they turned out to be very brave and warlike, and were victorious over all whom they went to attack. In process of time they marched against the kingdom of the monarch, their father, at which he was filled with consternation. On this his concubine asked the king why he was so terrified; to whom he replied, "The king of that country has a thousand sons, brave and warlike beyond compare, and they are coming to attack my country; this is why I am alarmed." To this the concubine replied, "Fear not! but erect on the east of the city a high tower, and when the rebels come, place me on it; I will restrain them". The king did so, and when the invaders arrived, the concubine addressed them from the tower, saying, "You are my children. Then why are you rebellious?" They replied, "Who are you that say you are our mother?" The concubine replied, "If ye will not believe me, all of you look up and open your mouths." On this the concubine, with both her hands, pressed her breasts, and from each breast proceeded five hundred jets of milk, which fell into the mouths of her thousand sons. On this the rebels, perceiving that she was indeed their mother, immediately laid down their bows and clubs. The two royal fathers, by a consideration of these circumstances, were able to arrive at the condition of Pratyêka Buddhas, and the tower erected in their honour remains to this day. In after times, when the Lord of the World arrived at supreme reason, he addressed his disciples in these words, "This is the place where I formerly laid aside my bow and my club." Men in after times, coming to know this, founded a tower in this place, and hence the name. The thousand children are in truth the thousand Buddhas of this Bhadrakalpa.

Buddha, when standing beside this tower, addressed Ānanda thus, "After three months I must enter *Nirvāṇa*", on which occasion Māra-rāja so fascinated the mind of Ānanda that he did not request Buddha to remain in the world.

Going east from this point three or four *li* there is a tower. One hundred years after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha there were at Vaiśālī certain Bhikshus who broke the rules of the *Vinaya* in ten particulars, saying that Buddha had said it was so, at which time the Arhats and the orthodox Bhikshus, making an assembly of 700 ecclesiastics, compared and collated the *Vinaya Piṭaka* afresh. Afterwards men erected a tower on this spot which still exists.

[111. The confluence of the five rivers.]

Going four *yojanas* east, we arrive at the confluence of the five rivers. When Ānanda was going from the country of Magadha towards Vaiśālī, desiring to enter *Nirvāṇa*, the Dêvas acquainted King Ajātaśatru of it. The king immediately set out after him at the head of his troops, and arrived at the banks of the river. The Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī, hearing that Ānanda was coming, likewise set out to meet him and arrived at the side of the river. Ānanda then reflected that if he were to advance King Ajātaśatru would be much grieved, and if he should go back, then the Lichchhavis would be indignant. Being perplexed, he forthwith entered the *Samādhi* called the "brilliancy of flame," consuming his body, and entered *Nirvāṇa* in the midst of the river. His body was divided into two parts; one part was found on either side of the river; so the two kings, taking the relics of half his body returned and erected towers over them.

Crossing the river, and going south one *yojana*, we arrive at Magadha and the town of Pāṭaliputra (Palin-fu).

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HIUEN TSIANG'S TRAVELS IN VAIŚĀLĪ AND THE ADJOINING VAJJIAN TERRITORY

Translated by Mr. Samuel Beal., B.A.

Going north-east from this [i.e. the Droṇa Stūpa], and crossing the Ganges,[1] after travelling 140 or 150 li, we come to the country of Fei-she-li (Vaiśālī).

FEI-SHE-LI (VAIŚĀLĪ)

This kingdom is about 5000 li in circuit. The soil is rich and fertile; flowers and fruits are produced in abundance. The *āmra* fruit (mango) and the *mocha* (banana) are very plentiful and much prized. The climate is agreeable and temperate.

The manners of the people are pure and honest. They love religion and highly esteem learning.

Both heretics and believers are found living together. There are several hundred *saṅghārāmas,* which are mostly dilapidated. The three or five which still remain have but few priests in them. There are several tens of Deva temples, occupied by sectaries of different kinds. The followers of the Nirgranthas are very numerous.

The capital city of Vaiśālī (*or,* called Vaiśālī) is to a great extent in ruins. Its old foundations are from 60 to 70 li in circuit. The royal precincts are about 4 or 5 li round: there are a few people living in it.

North-west of the royal city (*precincts*) 5 or 6 li, is a *saṅghārāma* with a few disciples. They study the teaching of the Little Vehicle, according to the Saṁmatīya school.

By the side of it is a *stūpa.* It was here Tathāgata delivered the *Vimalakīrtti Sūtra* (*Pi-mo-lo-kie-king*), and the son of a householder, Ratnākara, and others offered precious parasols (*to Buddha*).

To the east of this is a *stūpa.* It was here Śāriputra and others obtained perfect exemption (*became Arhats*).

To the south-east of this last spot is a *stūpa;* this was built by a king of Vaiśālī. After the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha, a former king of this country obtained a portion of the relics of his body, and to honour them as highly as possible raised (*this building*).[2]

[1] According to Cunningham, the pilgrim must have crossed the Gaṇḍak river, not the Ganges. This river flows within 12 miles of Dighwārā, the probable site of the Droṇa stūpa. So he regards the Ganges of this passage as a mistake for Gandak. Thomas Watters, however, regards the text as correct [Ed.]

[2] The Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī obtained a share of the relics of Buddha, and raised over them a *stūpa.* The scene found at Sāñchi (pl. xxviii. fig. 1, *Tree and Serpent Worship*) probably refers to this *stūpa* and its consecration.

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The records of India state: In this *stūpa* there was at first a quantity of relics equal to a "*hoh*" (ten pecks). Aśoka-rāja opening it, took away nine-tenths of the whole, leaving only one-tenth behind. Afterwards there was a king of the country who wished again to open the *stūpa*, but at the moment when he began to do so, the earth trembled, and he dared not proceed to open (*the stūpa*).

To the north-west is a *stūpa* built by Aśoka-rāja; by the side of it is a stone pillar about 50 or 60 feet high, with the figure of a lion on the top. To the south of the stone pillar is a tank. This was dug by a band of monkeys (*Markaṭahrada*) for Buddha's use. When he was in the world of old, Tathāgata once and again dwelt here.

Not far to the south of this tank is a *stūpa*; it was here the monkeys, taking the alms-bowl of Tathāgata, climbed a tree and gathered him some honey.

Not far to the south is a *stūpa*; this is the place where the monkeys offered the honey[1] to Buddha.

At the north-west angle of the lake there is still a figure of a monkey.

To the north-east of the *saṅghārāma* 3 or 4 li is a *stūpa*; this is the old site of the house of Vimalakīrtti (*Pi-mo-lo-ki*); various spiritual signs (*manifestations*) are exhibited here.

Not far from this is a spirit-dwelling (*a chapelp*); its shape like a pile of bricks. Tradition says this stone-pile is where the householder Vimalakīrtti preached the law when he was sick.

Not far from this is a *stūpa*; this is the site of the old residence of Ratnākara (*Pao tsi*).

Not far from this is a *stūpa*; this is the old house of the lady Āmra. It was here the aunt of Buddha and other Bhikshunīs obtained *Nirvāṇa*.

To the north of the *saṅghārāma* 3 or or 4 li is a *stūpa*; this indicates the place where Tathāgata stopped when about to advance to Kuśinagara to die, whilst men and Kinnaras followed him.[2]

From this not far to the north-west is a *stūpa*; here Buddha for the very last time gazed upon the city of Vaiśālī.

Not far to the south of this is a *vihāra*, before which is built a *stūpa*; this is the site of the garden of the Āmra-girl, which she gave in charity to Buddha.

By the side of this garden is a *stūpa*; this is the place where Tathāgata announced his death. When Buddha formerly dwelt in this place, he told Ānanda as follows:—"Those who obtain the four spiritual faculties are able to extend their lives to a kalpa. What is the term of years of Tathāgata then?" Thrice he asked this question, and Ānanda answered not, through the fascination of Māra. Then Ānanda rising from his seat, gave himself up to silent thought in a wood. At this time Māra coming to Buddha[3], asked him, saying, "Tathāgata has for a long time dwelt in the world teaching and converting. Those whom he has saved from the circling streams (*of transmigration*) are as numerous as the dust or the sands. This surely is the time to partake of the joy of *Nīrvāṇa*". Tathāgata taking some grains of dust on his nail, asked Māra, saying, "Are the grains of dust on my nail equal to the dust of the whole earth or not?" He answered, "The

[1] This scene is also found at Sāñchi (pl. xxvi. fig. 2, *Tree and Serpent Worship*). It is on the same pillar as the consecration scene alluded to above. The pillar was evidently the work or gift of the Vaiśālī people.

[2] The Kinnaras are said to be the horse-faced musicians of Kuvera; but the Chinese symbols describe them as "something different from men." They may be seen figured in the sculpture at Sāñchi (pl. xxvi. fig. 1), where they are coming to the place where Buddha stopped (figured by the oblong stone); this is another sculpture of the Vaiśālī pillar, and illustrates the notice in the text.

[3] This interview of Māra (called Piśuna, the wicked one, in the Chinese version, S.B.E. vol. xix, p. 267) is again found among the Sāñchi sculptures on the Vaiśālī pillar, pl. xxvi. fig. 1, lower scene. If the four identifications on this pillar are correct, we may conclude that the people of Vaiśālī were a Northern people allied to the Yue-chi.

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dust of the earth is much greater." Buddha said, "Those who are saved are as the grains of earth on my nail; those not saved like the grains of the whole earth; but after three months I shall die." Māra hearing it, was rejoiced and departed.

Meantime Ānanda in the wood suddenly had a strange dream, and coming to Buddha he told it to him saying, "I was in the wood, when I beheld in my dream a large tree, whose branches and leaves in their luxuriance cast a grateful shade beneath, when suddenly a mighty wind arose which destroyed and scattered the tree and its branches without leaving a mark behind. Oh, forbid it that the lord is going to die! My heart is sad and worn, therefore I have come to ask you if it be so or not?"

Buddha answered Ānanda, "I asked you before, and Māra so fascinated you that you did not then ask me to remain in the world. Māra-rāja has urged me to die soon, and I have covenanted to do so, and fixed the time. This is the meaning of your dream."

Not far from this spot is a *stūpa*. This is the spot where the thousand sons beheld their father and their mother. Formerly there was a Rishi who lived a secret life amid the crags and valleys. In the second month of spring he had been bathing himself in a pure stream of water. A roe-deer which came to drink there just after, conceived and brought forth a female child, very beautiful beyond human measure, but she had the feet of a deer. The Rishi having seen it, adopted and cherished it (*as his child*). As time went on, one on occasion he ordered her to go and seek some fire. In so doing she came to the hut of another Rishi; but wherever her feet trod there she left the impression of a lotus-flower on the ground. The other Rishī having seen this, was very much surprised, and bade her walk round his hut and he would give her some fire. Having done so and got the fire, she returned. At this time Fan-Yu-Wang (*Brahmadatta-rāja*) going out on a short excursion, saw the lotus-flower traces, and followed them to seek (*the cause*). Admiring her strange and wonderful appearance, he took her back in his carriage. The sooth-sayers casting her fortune said, "She will bear a thousand sons." Hearing this, the other women did nothing but scheme against her. Her time having been accomplished, she brought forth a lotus flower of a thousand leaves, and on each leaf was seated a boy. The other women slandered her on its account, and saying it was "an unlucky omen," threw (*the lotus*) into the Ganges, and it was carried away by the current.

The king of Ujiyana (*U-shi-yen*), down the stream, going out for an excursion observed a yellow-cloud-covered box floating on the water and coming towards him. He took it and opened it, and there saw a thousand boys; being well nourished, when they came to perfect stature, they were of great strength. Relying on these, he extended his kingdom in every direction, and encouraged by the victories of his troops, he was on the point of extending his conquest to this country (i.e. Vaiśālī). Brahmadatta-rāja hearing of it, was much alarmed; fearing his army was not able to contend successfully with the invaders, he was at a loss what to do. At this time the deer-footed girl, knowing in her heart that these were her sons, addressed the king thus: "Now that these youthful warriors are approaching the frontier, from the highest to the lowest there is an absence of courage (*heart*). Your feeble wife by her thought is able to conquer those redoubtable champions." The king not yet believing her, remained overwhelmed with fear. Then the deer-girl, mounting the city wall, waited the arrival of the warriors. The thousand youths having sourrounded the city with their soldiers, the deer-girl said to them, "Do not be rebellious! I am your mother; you are my sons." The thousand youths replied, "What extravagant words are these!" The deer-girl then

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pressing both her breasts, a thousand jets of milk flowed out therefrom, and by divine direction fell into their mouths. Then they laid aside their armour, broke their ranks, and returned to their tribe and family. The two countries mutually rejoiced, and the people rested in peace.

Not far from this spot is a *stūpa*. This is where Tathāgata walked for exercise, and left the traces thereof. In teaching (*or*, pointing to the traces) he addressed the congregation thus: "In ancient days, in this place, I returned to my family on seeing my mother. If you would know then, those thousand youths are the same as the thousand Buddhas of this Bhadra-kalpa."

To the east of the spot where Buddha explained this birth (jātaka) is a ruined foundation above which is built a *stūpa*. A bright light is from time to time reflected here. Those who ask (*pray*) in worship obtain their request. The ruins of the turretted preaching-hall, where Buddha uttered the *Samantamukha dhāraṇi* and other *sūtras*, are still visible.

By the side of the preaching-hall, and not far from it, is a *stūpa* which contains the relics of the half body of Ānanda.

No far from this are several *stūpas*—the exact number has not yet been determined. Here a thousand Pratyeka Buddhas (*To-kio*) attained *Nirvāṇa*.

Both within and without the city of Vaiśālī, and all round it, the sacred vestiges are so numerous that it would be difficult to recount them all. At every step commanding sites and old foundations are seen, which the succession of seasons and lapse of years have entirely destroyed. The forests are uprooted; the shallow lakes are dried up and stinking; nought but offensive remnants of decay can be recorded.

Going north-west of the chief city 50 or 60 li, we come to a great *stūpa*. This is where the Lichchhavis (*Li-ch'e-p'o*) took leave of Buddha. Tathāgata having left the city of Vaiśālī on his way to Kuśinagara, all the Lichchhavis, hearing that Buddha was about to die, accompanied him wailing and lamenting. The Lord of the World having observed their fond affection, and as words were useless to calm them, immediately by his spiritual power caused to appear a great river with steep sides and deep, the waves of which flowed on impetuously. Then the Lichchhavis were abruptly stopped on their way, moved with grief as they were. Then Tathāgata left them his *pātra* as a token of remembrance.

Two hundred li to the north-west of the city of Vaiśālī, or a little less, is an old and long-deserted city, with but few inhabitants. In it is a *stūpa*. This is the place where Buddha dwelt when, in old days, for the sake of an assembly of Bodhisattvas, men, and Devas, he recited an explanatory *jātaka* of himself when as a Bodhisattva he was a *chakravartin* monarch of this city and called Mahādeva (*Ta-tien*). He was possessed of the seven treasures, and his rule extended over the world (*the four empires*). Observing the marks of decay in himself, and concluding in his mind about the impermanency of his body, he took a high resolve (*being secretly affected by his reflections*), left his throne, gave up his country, and, becoming a hermit, assumed the dark robes and gave himself to study.

Going south-east from the city 14 or 15 li, we come to a great *stūpa*. It was here the convocation of the seven hundred sages and saints was held. One hundred and ten years after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha there were in Vaiśālī some Bhikkhus who broke the laws of Buddha and perverted the rules of discipline. At this time Yaśada (*Ye-she-t'o*) Āyushmat was stopping in the country of Kosala (*Kiao-so-lo*); Sambogha (*San-pu-kia*) Āyushmat was dwelling in the country of Mathurā; Revata (*Li-po-to*) Āyushmat was stopping in the country of Han-jo (*Kāṇyakubja*); Sāla (*Sha-lo*) Āyushmat was

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stopping in the country of Vaiśālī; Pujasumira (*Fu-she-su-mi-lo*=Kujjasobhita?) Āyushmat was stopping in the country of Sha-lo-li-fo (Salaribhu?): all these were great Arhats, possessed of independent power, faithful to the three *piṭakas*, possessed of the three enlightenments (*vidyās*), of great renown, knowing all that should be known, all of them disciples of Ānanda.

At this time Yaśada sent a message to summon the sages and saints to a convocation at the city of Vaiśālī. There was only wanting one to make up the 700, when Fu-she-su-mi-lo by the use of his divine sight saw the saints and sages assembled and deliberating about religious matters. By his miraculous power he appeared in the assembly. Then Sambhoga, in the midst of the assembly, baring his right breast and prostrating himself, (arose) and exclaimed with a loud voice, "Let the congregation be silent, respectfully thoughtful! In former days the great and holy King of the Law, after an illustrious career, entered *Nirvāṇa*. Although years and months have elapsed since then, his words and teaching still survive. But now the Bhikshus of Vaiśālī have become negligent and pervert the commandments. There are ten points in which they disobey the words of the Buddha (*the ten-power*: 'daśabala'). Now then, learned sirs, you know well the points of error; you are well acquainted with the teaching of the highly virtuous (*bhadanta*) Ānanda: in deep affection to Buddha let us again declare his holy will."

Then the whole congregation were deeply affected; they summoned to the assembly the Bhikshus and, according to the Vinaya, they charged them with transgression, bound afresh the rules that had been broken, and vindicated the holy law.

Going south 80 or 90 li from this place, we come to the *saṅghārāma* called Śvetapura (*Shi-fei-to-po-lo*); its massive towers, with their rounded shapes and double storeys, rise in the air. The priests are calm and respectful, and all study the great vehicle.

By the side of this building are traces where the four past Buddhas sat and walked.

By the side of these is a *stūpa* built by Aśoka-rāja. It was here, when Buddha was alive, that, on going southwards to the Magadha country, he turned northwards to look at Vaiśālī, and left there, on the road where he stopped to breathe, traces of his visit.

Going south-east from the Śvetapura *Saṅghārāma* 30 li or so, on either (south or north) side of the Ganges river there is a *stūpa*; this is the spot where the venerable Ānanda divided his body between the two kingdoms. Ānanda was on his father's side cousin of Tathāgata. He was a disciple (*śaiksha*) well acquainted with the doctrine (*collectanea*), thoroughly instructed in ordinary matters (*men and things*), and of masculine understanding. After Buddha's departure from the world he succeeded the great Kāśyapa in the guardianship of the true law, and became the guide and teacher of men devoted to religion (*men not yet Arhats*). He was dwelling in the Magadha country in a wood; as he was walking to and fro he saw a Śrāmaṇera (*novice*) repeating in a bungling way a *sūtra* of Buddha, perverting and mistaking the sentences and words. Ānanda having heard him, his feelings were moved towards him, and, full of pity, he approached the place where he was; he desired to point out his mistakes and direct him in the right way. The Śrāmaṇera, smiling, said, "Your reverence is of great age; your interpretation of the words is a mistaken one. My teacher is a man of much enlightenment; his years (*springs and autumns*) are in their full maturity. I have received from him personally the true method of interpreting (*the work in question*); there can be no mistake." Ānanda remained silent, and then went away, and with a sigh he said, "Although my years are many, yet for men's sake I was wishful to remain longer in the

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world, to hand down and defend the true law. But now men (*all creatures*) are stained with sin, and it is exceedingly difficult to instruct them. To stay longer would be useless: I will die soon." On this, going from Magadha, he went towards the city of Vaiśālī, and was now in the middle of the Ganges in a boat, crossing the river. At this time the king of Magadha, hearing of Ānanda's departure, his feelings were deeply affected towards him, and so, preparing his chariot, he hastened after him with his followers (*soldiers*) to ask him to return. And now his host of warriors, myriads in number, were on the southern bank of the river, when the king of Vaiśālī, hearing of Ānanda's approach, was moved by a sorrowful affection, and, equipping his host, he also went with all speed to meet him. His myriads of soldiers were assembled on the opposite bank of the river (the north side), and the two armies faced each other, with their banners and accoutrements shining in the sun. Ānanda, fearing lest there should be a conflict and a mutual slaughter, raised himself from the boat into mid-air, and there displayed his spiritual capabilities, and forthwith attained *Nirvāṇa*. He seemed as though encompassed by fire, and his bones fell in two parts, one on the south side, the other on the north side of the river. Thus the two kings each took a part, and, whilst the soldiers raised their piteous cry, they all returned home and built *stūpas* over the relics and paid them religious worship.

Going north-east from this 500 li or so, we arrive at the country of Fo-li-shi (Vṛijji).

FO-LI-SHI (VṚIJJI)[1]

This kingdom is about 4000 li in circuit. From east to west it is broad, and narrow from north to south. The soil is rich and fertile; fruits and flowers are abundant. The climate is rather cold.

The men are quick and hasty in disposition.

Most of the people are heretics; a few believe in the law of Buddha. There are about ten *saṅghārāmas*; the disciples (*priests*) are less than 1000. They study assiduously both the Great and Little Vehicles. There are several tens of Deva temples, with a great number of unbelievers.

The capital of the country is called Chen-shu-na. It is mostly in ruins. In the old royal precinct (*citadel or inner city*) there are yet some 3000 houses; it may be called either a village or a town.

To the north-east of the great river is a *saṅghārāma*. The priests are few, but they are studious and of a pure and dignified character.

From this going west along the side of the river, we find a *stūpa* about 30 feet high. To the the south of it is a stretch of deep water. The great merciful Lord of the World converted here some fishermen. In days long past, when Buddha was living, there were 500 fishermen who joined in partnership to fish for and catch the finny tribes, whereupon they entangled in the river stream a great fish with eighteen heads; each head had two eyes. The fishermen desired to kill it, but Tathāgata being then in the country of Vaiśālī, with his divine sight saw what was going on, and raising within him a compassionate heart, he used this opportunity as a means for converting and directing (men). Accordingly, in order to open their minds, he said to the great congregation, "In the Vṛijji country there is a great fish; I wish to guide it (*into the right*

[1] The country of the Vṛijjis or Samvṛijjis, *i.e.*, united Vṛijjis, was that of the confederated eight tribes of the people called the Vṛijjis or Vajjis, one of which, viz., that of the Lichchhavis, dwelt at Vaiśālī. They were republicans.

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way), in order to enlighten the fishermen; you therefore should embrace this opportunity."

On this the great congregation surrounding him, by their spiritual power passed through the air and came to the river-side. He sat down as usual, and forthwith addressed the fishermen; "Kill not that fish. By my spiritual power I will open the way for the exercise of expedients, and cause this great fish to know its former kind of life; and in order to do this I will cause it to speak in human language and truly to exhibit human affections (*feelings*)." Then Tathāgata, knowing it beforehand, asked (*the fish*), "In your former existence, what crime did you commit that in the circle of migration you have been born in this evil way and with this hideous body?" The fish said, "Formerly, by the merit I had gained, I was born in a noble family as the Brāhmaṇ Kapitha (*Kie-pi-tha*). Relying on this family origin, I insulted other persons; relying on my extensive knowledge, I despised all books and rules, and with a supercilious heart I reviled the Buddhas with opprobrious words, and ridiculed the priests by comparing them to every kind of brute beast, as the ass, or the mule, or the elephant, or the horse, and every unsightly form. In return for all this I received this monstrous body of mine. Thanks, however, to some virtuous remnants during former lives, I am born during the time of a Buddha's appearance in the world, and permitted to see his sacred form, and myself to receive his sacred instruction and to confess and repent of my former misdeeds."

On this Tathāgata, according to the circumstances, instructed and converted him by wisely opening his understanding. The fish having received the law, expired, and by the power of this merit was born in heaven. On this he considered his body, and reflected by what circumstances he was thus born. So, knowing his former life and recollecting the circumstances of his conversion, he was moved with gratitude to Buddha, and, with all the Devas, with bended form he bowed before him and worshipped, and then having circumambulated him, he withdrew, and, standing apart, offered precious flowers and unguents in religious service. The Lord of the World having directed the fishermen to consider this, and on their account preached the law, they were all forthwith enlightened and offered him profound respect. Repenting of their faults, they destroyed their nets, burnt their boats, and having taken refuge in the law, they assumed the religious habit, and by means of the excellent doctrine they heard came out of the reach of worldly influences and obtained the holy fruit (*of Arhats*).

Going north-east from this spot about 100 li, we come to an old city, on the west of which is a *stūpa* built by Aśoka-rāja, in height about 100 feet. Here Buddha, when living in the world, preached the law for six months and converted the Devas.

Going north 140 or 150 paces is a little *stūpa*; here Buddha, for the sake of the Bhikshus, established some rules of discipline.

West of this not far is a *stūpa* containing hair and nail relics. Tathāgata formerly residing in this place, men from all the neighbouring towns and villages flocked together and burnt incense, and scattered flowers, and lighted lamps and torches in his honour.

Going north-west from this 1400 or 1500 li, crossing some mountains and entering a valley, we come to the country of Ni-po-lo (Nepāla).

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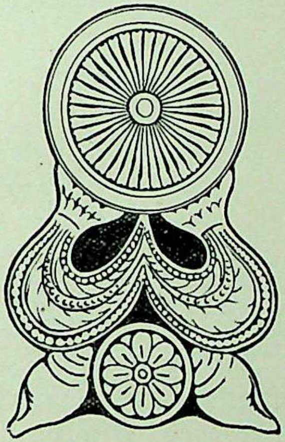
NI-PO-LO (NEPÂL)

This country is about 4000 li in circuit, and is situated among the Snowy Mountains. The capital city is about 20 li round.. . . . . .
The king is a Kshattriya, and belongs to the family of the Lichchhavís.. . . . He has a sincere faith in the law of Buddha. . . . .

To the south-east of the capital is a little stream and a lake. . . . .

From this going back[1] to Vaiśālī, and crossing the Ganges to the south we arrive at the country of Mo-kie-t'o (Magadha).

[1] The pilgrim does not appear himself to have gone into Nepāl. He went to the capitāl of the Vṛijjis, and there speaks from report.



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THE ROMANTIC HISTORY OF BUDDHA'S ALMS-BOWL

MAJOR-GENERAL A. CUNNINGHAM, C.S.I., C.I.E.

Vaiśālī was celebrated in the early ages of Buddhism for the possession of the Alms-bowl of Buddha, which he had given to the Lichchhavis when they took leave of him at the old city on their northern frontier, which I have identified with Kesariya, 30 miles to the north-west of Vaiśālī. This bowl, which still exists, has a very romantic history. Originally it was presented to the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī by Buddha himself when he sent them back to their homes. This is attested by both Fa-Hian and Hwen Thsang. The former says that he gave them his alms-bowl as a memorial; the latter that he "laissa son vase de religieux pour qu'il leur servît de souvenir."[1] Its subsequent history appears to have been unknown to the latter pilgrim, who does not mention it again.

When Fa-Hian was in Ceylon "he heard a Buddhist pilgrim from India....say Buddha's alms-bowl was originally in Pi-she-li (or Vaiśālī). It is now in the country of Chien-to-wei (Gandhâra). After a certain number of years....it will be taken on to the western Yueh-shih country."[2] This is Mr. Giles's translation, from which Mr. Beal slightly differs: "The alms-bowl of Buddha originally was preserved in the city of Vaiśālī, but now it is in the borders of Gandhâra. In somewhat like a hundred years....it will again be transported to the country of the western Yu-chi."

The bowl was seen by Fa-Hian and his companions at Fo-lu-sha (or Parshâwar); but he does not say a word as to how it got there. I have, however, found a notice of its removal in Vassilief's translations from Târânâth. In describing the career of the celebrated Aswaghosha, he says that "the king of the Little Yuchi invaded Magadha and carried off the bowl of Buddha and Aswaghosha."[3] This raid must have taken place some time during the 2nd century A.D., as, according to Târânâth, Aswaghosha was a disciple of Pârswa, who conducted the third Buddhist Synod under Kanishka, while Hwen Thsang makes him a contemporary of Nâgârjuna, who is famous as the long-lived contemporary of the same king. The bowl must therefore have been carried off either by Kanishka himself, or by his successor Huvishka early in the 2nd century A.D.

Fa-Hian gives the following account of the bowl which he saw in Gandhâra shortly after A.D. 400:—

"Buddha's alms-bowl is in this country, and a king of the Yueh-shih got together a large army to attack this country, wishing to carry it off. When he had subdued the country, being an ardent supporter of Buddhism, he wanted to take the bowl away with him; and accordingly, having first made offerings to the three precious ones, he decorated a huge elephant and put the bowl on its back. The elephant then fell down and was unable to move. Then a four-wheeled cart was made, and the bowl being put in it eight elephants were harnessed to draw it. When again they were unable to move,

[1] Giles's Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms, p. 105.
[2] Beal's Records of Buddhist Countries, p. 161.
[3] Vassilief's Târânâth, translated by M. La Comme, p. 210.

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the king knew that the time had not yet come, and was full of shame and regret. Therefore he built a pagoda on that spot, and also a monastery, leaving a garrison to guard the bowl, and making all kinds of offerings. There may be about 700 priests. When it is near midday, the priests bring out the bowl, and, together with the people, make all kinds of offerings. They then eat their midday meal; and in the evening, at the time of burning incense, they bring it out again."[1]

From this account it would appear that an attempt was made by the king of the Yuchi to remove the bowl from Gandhâra, most probably to Kabul or even Balkh, which was the capital of the later kings of the Great Yuchi. No date can be fixed for this attempt, but it probably took place during the 3rd century.

As no mention is made of the alms-bowl in A.D. 520 by the pilgrims Hwei Seng and Sung-Yun, it seems almost certain that it had already been removed from Gandhâra before their visit. This removal probably took place shortly after the conquest of Gandhâra by the little Yuchi under Kitolo, or about A.D. 425-450, as Sung-Yun describes their first king as a worshipper of demons and a despiser of Buddhism, who was at war with the country of Kipin. The bowl was probably carried off by the people of Gandhâra, who emigrated westwards to the banks of the Arghandâb in the ancient Arachosia, where they founded a city named after their original country Gandhâra, which still exists as old Kandahâr at a short distance from the modern town of that name.

Sung-Yan entered Gandhâra in A.D. 520, and as he states that two generations had passed away since Laelih, the persecutor of Buddhism, had been set up as king of Gandhâra, the emigration of the Gandhâras cannot be placed later than A.D.450. "They had a great respect for the Law of Buddha and loved to read the sacred books." They took with them the famous Alms-bowl of Buddha and set it up in their new city of Gandhâr or Kandhar, where it now stands "in an obscure little Mahammadan shrine." Dr. Bellew describes it as "a huge bowl, carved out of a solid block of dark green serpentine." The straight part above is carved with six lines of Arabic inscriptions, of which a copy was kindly sent to me several years ago by Sir Frederick Pollock. I forwarded the copy to my lamented friend Blochmann, but unfortunately it was lost or stolen on the way, and neither he nor I could ever learn anything about it. The inscripitions were of early date, as I remember reading the name of Subuktugin, and I think also that of Mahmud.

Unfortunately for the satisfactory identification of this bowl the translations of Fa-Hian's description, which is the only one that we possess, differ very considerably, as will be seen in the following quotations from Chapter XII.

According to Remusat's translation: "The pot may contain about two bushels. It is of mixed colour, in which black predominates. It is well formed on all four sides, about two lines thick, bright and polished."

According to Beal: "The bowl contains about two *Tan* (a dry measure equal to $1\frac{1}{8}$ gallons). It is of a mixed colour, but mostly black. The seams, where the four parts join together, are bright. It is about 2 inches thick, and is kept well polished and bright."

The third translation is by Giles: "It might hold over two gallons, and is of several colours,

[1] Giles's Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms, pp. 19, 20.

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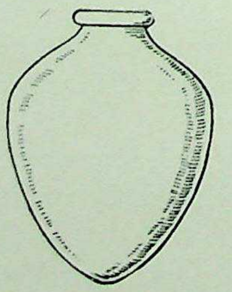
chiefly black. The four joinings are clearly distinguishable. It is about one-fifth of an inch thick, and is transparent and bright."

As one would expect to find the actual Alms-bowl from which Buddha ate his daily food—such a bowl would not have satisfied the belief of any Buddhist—just as the tooth of Buddha, now shown in Ceylon, is more like that of an elephant than the tooth of a man, so the Alms-bowl of Buddha preserved at Vaiśālī and afterwards carried off to Gandhâra, would have been at least five or six times the actual diameter of any real bowl. So also all the foot-marks of Buddha were always represented as of gigantic size.

The "four joinings" mentioned by Fa-Hian refer to the story of the kings of the four quarters—Indra, Yama, Varuna, and Kuvera—having each offered a bowl to Buddha, when he, wishing not to disappoint any one of them, accepted all four bowls and miraculously joined them into one in which the four joinings were distinctly visible.

The whole story about Buddha's bowl having been originally enshrined at Vaiśālī had been quite lost before the time of Hwen Thsang's visit, and as Fa-Hian says nothing about its position when describing the holy places at Vaiśālī it would seem as if the site had been forgotten. Apparently Fa-Hian knew nothing about it until he heard of it accidentally in Ceylon. Even when he saw the Alms-bowl in Gandhâra, he is quite silent as to its original position in Vaiśālī. This silence is, I think, a presumptive proof that a very long time must have passed since the removal of the bowl to Gandhâra, and that the date of the first half of the 2nd century A.D., which I have deduced from Târânâth's statement, is most probably correct. If the removal had been recent, Fa-Hian would almost certainly have heard of it in both places.

Mention is made of the bowl of Buddha at a much later date, in A.D., 665, when the Chinese pilgrim Yuan-Chan saw it in the *Nava Vihāra* (or new monastery) when on his way from Balkh to Sintu (or India). The notice is confined to the remark that in company with a *Lokāyatika*, he "paid reverence to the water-pitcher of Buddha and other relics."



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DR. VINCENT A. SMITH ON VAIŚĀLĪ

I

As early as 1902 Dr. Vincent A. Smith, the eminent English historian, wrote a long article on Vaiśālī in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (pp. 267-288). The important portions of the article are reproduced below so the our readers may know that the great scholar had profound love for Vaiśālī and that he had devoted much time over its proper identification. He says:—

"I have no doubt whatever that Basāṛ and the adjoining villages occupy the site of the city of Vaiśālī, and am further convinced that, while the limits of the city can even now be determined with a near approach to accuracy, a very moderate amount of local exploration, conducted under competent guidance, should result in the determination of the exact sites of many renowned monuments."

With regard to the present situation of Vaiśālī, he says:—

"The village of Basāṛ (बसाड़) stands in about N. lat. 25° 58′ 20″ and E. long. 85° 11′ 30″, twenty-six or twenty-seven miles in a direct line a little to the west of north from Patna, the ancient Pāṭaliputra, and about twenty miles from Hajipur on the northern bank of the Ganges opposite Patna. It is due north of the Dīghā Ghāṭ railway station on the Bengal and North-Western Railway."

Dr. Vincent A. Smith now proceeds to prove the identity of Vaiśālī with Basāṛ. His first reason is:—

"The great mound or 'fort' at the village is known as the Fort of Rājā Bisāl (Visāl). The close correspondence of the name of this eponymous local chieftain with the city name of Vaiśālī or Vesāli is obvious, and, although not by itself conclusive evidence of identity, is of great weight as corroboration of other evidence."

The second reason then follows:—

"Well-known Buddhist legends, which it seems unnecessary to repeat in detail, clearly imply that Vaiśālī lay beyond the Ganges at a moderate distance in a northerly direction from Pāṭaliputra, and on the road from that city to Kusinārā (Kuśinagara).

"The traditional account of Gautama Buddha's last journey relates that he travelled leisurely from Pāṭaliputra to Vaiśālī in three stages, halting twice on the way, first at Koṭigrāma and next at Nadiyāgrāma. Travellers in India whose journey begins with the crossing of a great river are always glad to make their first halt as near as possible to the further bank of the river. The ancient town of Hājīpur (N. lat. 25° 40′, E. long. 85° 18′ 30″), which stands on the eastern bank of the Gandak river and the northern bank of the Ganges at a distance in a direct line of six or seven miles from Patna, is still the first halting place for the traveller proceeding north from Patna. We may be quite certain that Koṭigrāma, the first camping-ground of Buddha, was at or close to Hājīpur.

"Lālganj, situated twelve miles from Hājīpur and eight from Basāṛ, is now the principal village

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intermediate between those two places, and Nadiyāgrāma should be looked for in the vicinity of Lālganj. Careful local enquiry would probably find the names Koṭigrāma and Nadiyāgrāma surviving in slightly modified forms, such as Koṭgāon and Nadiyāon, but no such names are entered in the Indian Atlas, sheet No. 103.

"The position of Basāṛ at a distance of three easy marches north of Patna exactly agrees with the position of Vaiśālī in relation to Pāṭaliputra as described by Buddhist tradition."

The third reason comes afterwards:—

"Hiuen Tsiang places the *stūpa* marking the locality of the orthodox Council or Convocation of Vaiśālī at a spot two and a half miles (15 or 16 *li*) south-east from the city. At a distance of 15 or 16 miles (80 or 90 *li*) to the south of this *stūpa* stood the splendid monastery of Śvetapura, which marked the place where the *sūtra* called "Bodhisattva-piṭaka" was supposed to have been revealed. A *stūpa*, ascribed to Aśoka, stood beside the monastery, and preserved the memory of the spot where Buddha, when going south to Magadha, stopped to look back upon Vaiśālī. The Śvetapura monastery, therefore, stood on the road from Vaiśālī to Pāṭaliputra, at a distance of about 20 miles from the former city, and close to the river. Five or six miles (30 *li*) to the south-east of Śvetapura a *stūpa* on the northern bank of the Ganges marked the position of the ferry where, according to the legend, Ānanda divided his body, and gave half to the king of Magadha on the southern and half to the king of Vaiśālī on the northern side of the river. A corresponding *stūpa* stood on the southern bank. The ferry connected by legend with Ānanda was therefore, 23 or 24 miles ($2\frac{1}{2}+15$ or $16+5$ or 6) distant from Vaiśālī in a direction slightly east of south, and, inasmuch as the Ganges then flowed a good deal farther to the north than it does now, the *stūpa* marking the northern end of the ferry should be looked for near Dāūdnagar, about six miles south-east from Hājīpur. The *stūpa* at the southern end of the ferry must have been carried away by the river. The Śvetapura monastery must have been near Hājīpur. Its "massive towers", of which Hiuen Tsiang speaks, were probably wooden, but it is quite possible that careful search would succeed in tracing the substantial brick foundations on which those towers rested.

"The position of Vaiśālī in relation to Śvetapura on the bank of the Ganges agrees accurately with the position of Basāṛ in relation to the river."

The next geographical argument follows:—

"Hiuen Tsiang expressly states that Vaiśālī lay on the road from Pāṭaliputra to Nepāl. Basāṛ lies on the ancient royal road from the capital to Nepāl, marked by three of Asoka's pillars which passed Kesariyā, Lauriyā Ararāj, Betiyā, Lauṛiyā-Nandangaṛh, Chankigaṛh, and Rāmpuwā, entering the hills by the Bhiknā Thorī pass. The jealousy of the existing Nepalese government compels the modern traveller to take a more easterly route and pass through Sigauli (Segowlee) in lat. 26°44′, long. 84° 47.′

The learned Doctor proceeds :—

"The geographical tests of the identity of Basāṛ and Vaiśālī having been proved satisfactory, I now proceed to apply a third test of the same kind."

The third test is given below:—

"The *stūpa* near Kesariyā, known by the name of Rājā Ben Chakravartī is the spot erroneously described by Fa-hien as the scene of the Lichchhavi leave-taking, and correctly described by Hiuen Tsiang as the memorial of a Chakravartin Rājā. Both pilgrims substantially agree in their estimate

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of the distance of this locality from Vaiśālī, Fa-hien giving the round figure "5 *yojanas*", equivalent to 38 miles, while the more accurate Hiuen Tsiang states the distance as being "a little less than 200 *li*". Five *yojanas* being the exact equivalent of 200 *li*, the term "a little less than 200 *li*" may be fairly interpreted as equivalent to 4½ *yojanas*, or 33 miles, which is the approximate marching distance between Basāṛ and Kesariyā. Measured on the map (Sheets 102 and 103 of the Indian Atlas), the direct distance between Busadh Puttee (Basāṛ) and the "hillock with temple" south-west of Kesariyā village is about 30 miles. Consequently, in relation to Kesariyā the correspondence in position between Basāṛ and Vaisālī is again proved to be perfect."

A fourth geographical test follows:—

"Fa-hien states that "the confluence of the five rivers," that is to say, of the Ganges, Son, Ghāgrā, Gandak, and some smaller stream not identified, was distant four *yojanas*, or about 30 miles, eastward from the *stūpa* to the north of Vaiśālī, which, according to his guides, marked the scene of the Buddhist Council or Convocation of Vaiśālī. The river Ganges below the present junction with the Gandak opposite Patna has made a considerable move in a southerly direction, having in ancient times flowed much farther to the north. In those days the Son followed the present course of the Punpun and Murhār rivers, and joined the Ganges to the north of Phatuhā (Fatuhā), about 10 miles east from Patna and about 25 miles east from the present point of junction. As long as the vast mass of water from the Son was thrown into the Ganges below Patna, the latter river was necessarily forced towards the north. When the mouth of the Son moved to the west and the pressure from its waters was withdrawn, the Ganges naturally took a more southerly course. In Fa-hien's time Pāṭaliputra stood in the tongue of land between the Ganges and the Son, but nearer to the latter river, and might be accurately described as situated on the bank of the Son. The old *ghāṭs*, or river-side stairs of the city, can still be traced along the bank of the ancient bed of the Son. The critic who merely glances at the modern map would suppose Fa-hien to be mistaken in describing Aśoka's city of Pāṭaliputra as being distant a *yojana*, or some seven miles from the Ganges where he crossed at the confluence. But a knowledge of the changes in the courses of the rivers as explained above fully justifies the pilgrim's description, and explains his meaning without violence to his text. The confluence of the five rivers must have been situated near the villages named Bāzār and Gopālpur (*I.A.*, Sheet 103), which stand north of Fatuhā, and about nine miles south-east from Hājīpur. The distance from those villages to the ruins of Aśoka's city on the old course of the Son is about eight miles. Fa-hien when defining direction commonly uses the four cardinal points only. He therefore describes the confluence of the five rivers as being "to the east" from Vaiśālī, and Pāṭaliputra as being "south" from the confluence. The true bearings are approximately south-east and south-west respectively.

"The direct distance measured on the map from Baniyā (Buneean), situated north-west of Basāṛ, which approximately marks the position of Fa-hien's "convocation *stūpa*," to Bāzār is 29½ miles, or four *yojanas* as required. The distance from Bāzār to Aśoka's city of Pāṭaliputra being about eight miles, the city would have been in the dry season about a *yojana* from the southern bank of the river, as stated by the pilgrim. Thus, a fourth geographical text vigorously applied establishes the identity of Vaiśālī with Basāṛ."

Dr. V. A. Smith now proceeds to summarise his arguments given above:—

"If my readers have had the patience to follow me so far, I trust that they will be satisfied that the remains at Basāṛ and the neighbouring villages beyond doubt occupy the site of the famous city Vaiśālī.

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The identity of the site is established by the continuance of the name of Vaiśālī in the forms Basāṛ (or Basāṛh) and Bisāl, as well as by the exact agreement in the positions of Basāṛ and Vaiśālī on the old royal road from Pāṭaliputra (Patna) to Nepāl with reference to Pāṭaliputra itself, to the course of the Ganges, to the Kesariyā *stūpa*, and to 'the confluence of the five rivers.' "

The learned Doctor now adopts another line of arguments and says:—

"The discussion of the topography of Vaiśālī, on which I now propose to enter, will be found to strongly corroborate the geographical arguments set forth above.

"The exact date of Hiuen Tsiang's visit to Vaiśālī is not known, but the year 635 A.D. may be assumed as approximately the correct date. His description of the city is unusually detailed and precise, and enables the modern reader not only to form an accurate conception of the state of the ruins in the seventh century A.D., but also to mark on the map with a close approach to exactness the position of each monument described.

"At the time of the pilgrim's visit the city was to a great extent in ruins. The buildings were in a state of advanced decay, the forests had been uprooted, and the numerous lakes and ponds had shrunk into offensive swamps. The ruins covered a space about twelve miles (60 or 70 *li*) in circuit, and included the remains of hundreds of Buddhist monasteries, out of which only three or four were occupied by a few monks. The Jains (Nirgranthas) were numerous, as might naturally be expected, Vaiśālī having been the birthplace of their religion; and Brahmanical Hindus of various sects worshipped at more than a score ('several tens') of temples. The citadel, or palace precinct, was less than a mile (4 or 5 *li*) in circuit, and was inhabited by a small population. This citadel is obviously represented by the mound now known as Rājā Bisāl's Fort (Bisālgaṛh), which retains the ancient name almost unaltered and in dimensions exactly agrees with Hiuen Tsiang's description.

"A monastery tenanted by a few friars of the Saṁmatīya school of the Hīnayāna stood about a mile (5 or 6 *li*) north-west of the citadel, and apparently within the city walls. Hiuen Tsiang specifies the position of most of the monuments mentioned by him with reference to this monastery, which was evidently his residence during his sojourn.

"Close to the monastery three *stūpas* attracted the pilgrim's special attention. One of these commemorated the delivery of the Vimalakīrtti Sūtra and the presentation of precious parasols to Buddha. The second marked the spot where Sāriputra and others attained the rank of saint (arhat). The third, which stood at a short distance to the south-east, was the most interesting monument at Vaiśālī, being the *stūpa* which enshrined the share of the relics obtained by the unnamed king of Vaiśālī at the time of the cremation of the body of Gautama Buddha. This *stūpa*, dating from about B.C. 500, will probably, when identified, prove to be similar to the monument at Piprāvā, which enshrined the share of the relics obtained by the Śākyas of Kapilavastu.

"The Saṁmatīya monastery, the *stūpa* containing the cremation relics, as well as the *stūpas* of Sāriputra and the Vimalakīrtti Sūtra, must all lie in a compact group between the Kharonā tank and the village of Pharāwal, where a large mound exists. Bābū P.C. Mukherjī, when visiting Vaisālī discerned that the cremation-relics *stūpa* must be near Pharāwal. It is astonishing that Sir Alexander Cunningham made no attempt to ascertain the position of this most interesting monument of the earliest period of Buddhism, which probably still contains the relics of Gautama. According to a legend told by Hiuen Tsiang, Aśoka removed nine-tenths of the original deposit, leaving one-tenth behind. I have no doubt that careful survey, supplemented by intelligent excavation, will bring to

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light this *stūpa*, which is almost certain to contain a valuable inscription.

"Having visited and described the more conspicuous and interesting monuments close to the monastery where he lodged, which must all have been situated within the walls, Hiuen Tsiang turned towards the north-west, where he found a distinct group of holy places. He observed a *stūpa* built by Aśkoa, beside which stood a stone pillar 50 or 60 feet high surmounted by the figure of a lion. To the south of the pillar was a tank, which, according to the legend, was dug by monkeys for the use of Buddha, and two *stūpas* to the south of the tank marked the spots where the monkeys gathered honey and offered it. The pilgrim notes that a figure of a monkey still stood at the north-western corner of the tank.

"His description of these monuments is strictly applicable to the remains situated on a low mound one mile south-east of Bakhirā village and about two miles north-north-west of Bisālgaṛh, the fort of Basāṛ. Aśoka's pillar with its lion-capital complete is still standing. Its height from the water-level is known to be 44 feet 2 inches, and several feet are submerged. The total height, therefore, closely agrees with Hiuen Tsiang's estimate. A ruined *stūpa* of solid brick due north of the pillar is evidently that erected by Aśoka. The tank to the south of the pillar, measuring about 200 feet in length from east to west and 150 feet in width from north to south, agrees exactly in position with that connected by Hiuen Tsiang with the legend of the pious monkeys who offered honey to Buddha. Small mounds to the south of the tank seem to represent the *stūpas* which commemorated the monkeys' piety. A life-size statue of Buddha, with an inscription, considered by Cunningham to date from the tenth century, was found in the ruins of a temple about 720 feet north of the *stūpa*, and Lieut.-Colonel Waddell observed on the pedestal of a similar statue, or perhaps the same one, a representation of the monkey legend. No hesitation, I think, need be felt in accepting Cunningham's identification of the remains south-east of Bakhirā with the group of ruins described by Hiuen Tsiang as lying to the north-west of the Saṁmatīya monastery.

"I may observe in passing that the legend of the presentation of a pot of honey to Buddha by a monkey, or company of monkeys, is often represented in sculpture, and was localized at Mathurā as well as at Vaiśālī.

"I am unable to agree with Cunningham (i, 56) that the city of Vaiśālī, strictly so called, included the Monkey Tank group of ruins and Bakhirā village. Attentive consideration of the testimony of Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsiang permits no doubt that both Bakhirā and the Monkey Tank group of ruins fall outside the line of the ancient walls. The Kūṭāgāra, or 'upper-storied' hall, where Buddha dwelt during the fifth year of his ministry, was situated in the precincts of the Mahāvana Vihāra, or monastery of the great forest, and on the bank of, or close to, the Monkey Tank. Fa-hien informs us that the great forest, or Mahāvana, lay to the north of the city, and that the 'double-galleried *vihāra*' where Buddha dwelt (i.e., the Kūṭāgāra) was in that forest. But inasmuch as the 'double-galleried *vihāra*' adjoined the monkey Tank, that tank also must have been within the forest and without the city. The '*stūpa* of the last book,' which will be mentioned presently, stood outside the western gate, and it is impossible to locate this *stūpa* if Bakhirā be considered part of the city. The village of Kolluā, or Kolhuā, which is unfortunately not marked on the maps accessible to me, is close to the Monkey Tank, and probably represents the ancient suburb Kollāga. The Monkey Tank group of remains may properly be regarded as forming part of that suburb. The site of Bakhirā village lay, I should think, quite clear of the city. It is, however, quite possible that when Hiuen

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Tsiang estimated the circuit of the 'old foundations' of the ruined city as measuring some twelve miles (60 or 70 *li*), he meant to include the Monkey Tank group of monuments. Excluding that group, the periphery of the walled city, as will presently be explained, seems to have amounted to about ten miles only.

"The third group of monuments described in detail by Hiuen Tsiang, consisted of four buildings distant more than half a mile (3 or 4 *li*) in a north-easterly direction from his temporary residence at the Saṁmatīya monastery. A *stūpa* marked the reputed site of the house where the convert Vimalakīrtti had lived, and close by a so-called 'spirit-dwelling in shape like a pile of bricks' preserved the memory of the spot where he had preached. A second *stūpa* commemorated the residence of Ratnākara (?Ratnakūṭā), and a third monument of the same kind occupied the site of the residence of the celebrated courtezan Āmrapālī, whose hospitality Buddha had not disdained to accept. The aunt of Buddha and other nuns were believed to have attained Nirvāṇa at this spot. The monuments included in this group must have been situated at or close to the site of the hamlet, now called Chak Aborā. It seems to be possible that this name may preserve that of Āmba-or Āmrapālī. Āmbapura might easily pass into Abaura or Abora. This group of monuments was evidently inside the city walls.

"The fourth group of buildings selected by Hiuen Tsiang for special notice is described by him with reference to a *stūpa* situated to the north of the monastery where he lodged at a distance of about three-quarters of a mile (3 or 4 *li*). This *stūpa*, which evidently was inside the walls, marked the spot where Buddha, attended by a crowd of men and angels, was believed to have halted for a moment before he passed out by the western gate on his long journey to Kusinārā and to death. At a short distance to the north-west of this *stūpa*, a similar monument, outside the walls, recalled the memory of the long, last look which the Master took at the city where he had dwelt so long.

"A little way to the south of this *stūpa* of the last look, Hiuen Tsiang was shown a *vihāra* and a *stūpa* said to mark the site of the garden presented to Buddha by Āmrapālī. The two last-named monuments may possibly have been inside the walls, because Fa-hien explicitly records that 'inside the city the woman Āmrapālī built a *vihāra* in honour of Buddha, which is now standing as it was at first.' As to the position of the garden, Hiuen Tsiang seems to have been misinformed. Fa-hien correctly places it to the south of the city on the west side of the road from Pāṭaliputra.

"Another *stūpa*, near the site shown as that of the garden to Hiuen Tsiang, commemorated, according to his guides, the spot where Buddha announced his approaching dissolution to his attendant Ānanda.

"Yet another *stūpa*, not far off, marked the spot where, according to a wild legend, 'the thousand sons beheld their father and their mother.' Fa-hien relates a variant of this fantastic legend, which belongs to the Jātaka cycle, and gives the *stūpa* the quaint name of "bows and weapons laid down." He fixes its position as being three *li*, say a thousand yards, to the north-west of the city. Close by a *stūpa* had been erected on the spot where Buddha had expounded the meaning of the Jātaka legend of the thousand sons.

"Further to the east were the ruins of the 'turretted preaching hall, where Buddha uttered the *Samantamukhadhārani* and other *sūtras*'. This hall is the 'double-galleried *vihāra* where Buddha dwelt' in the great forest north of the city as described by Fa-hien, near which stood the *stūpa* built by the Lichchhavis over their half of the body of Ānanda. This *stūpa*, according to Hiuen Tsiang, was

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'by the side of the preaching hall, and not far from it.' The same hall is described in other books as the Kūṭāgāra on the bank of the Monkey Tank, and we are thus able to check and combine the topographical indications given by the two pilgrims, and to fix the approximate position of each building described.

"Fa-hien supplies another and important datum by the statement that the *stūpa* which commemorated the site of the Council of Vaiśālī stood three or four *li*, say 1,000 to 1,200 yards, eastward from the *stūpa* of 'bows and weapons laid down.' He also tells us that the *stūpa* standing on the spot where Buddha foretold his approaching dissolution was 'by the side' of the 'bows and weapons laid down' monument. In this detail he differs from Hiuen Tsiang.

"Bābū P. C. Mukherjī is very probably right in locating the site of the Kūṭāgāra to the north-east of the Aśoka pillar, 'where the field is comparatively high, and where some years ago the local zamīndār excavated hundreds of cartloads of bricks, which he carried to Bakhirā to build his house'. The scene of the Council of Vaiśālī according to Fa-hien's guides, must have been close to the Kūṭāgāra, and the *stūpa* over the half body of Ānanda should be looked for in the same group of ruins.

"The *stūpa* of the "thousand sons", or 'bows and weapons laid down,' and the adjoining *stūpa* marking the spot where Buddha, according to Fa-hien, foretold his death, which were about 1,000 yards west of the Kūṭāgāra, must be represented by the 'two high conical mounds half a mile to the west of the pillar' known locally either as 'Bhīm Sen's baskets' (pallā), or as "Rājā Bisāl's battery" (*morca*). These two *stūpas*, according to the testimony both of Cunningham and Bābū P. C. Mukherjī, are constructed of earth without bricks, and are used as a quarry by the Luniyas, or saltpetre-makers. They are, no doubt, of very early date.

"It is interesting to observe that in two cases the distinct statements of the two Chinese pilgrims differ so irreconcilably that they can be explained only by the assumption that their guides showed them different sites under the same names. Fa-hien places the garden of Āmrapālī where we should expect to find it, a little to the south of the city, and he adds that it was situated to the west of the road from Pāṭaliputra. He does not mention any *stūpa* or monument as marking the site. Hiuen Tsiang was shown a *stūpa* on the alleged site of the garden, which he places a short distance to the south of the '*stūpa* of the last look', and consequently to the west of the city.

"A more important discrepancy concerns the locality of the famous Council of Vaiśālī, which Hiuen Tsiang places about 2½ miles to the south-east of the city. He says that the site was marked by a 'great *stūpa*,' of which careful exploration will probably disclose remains, although Cunningham's hasty researches failed to find them. I have not the slightest doubt that Hiuen Tsiang saw the 'great *stūpa*', and that his guides told him that it marked the locality where the Council was held.

"Fa-hien, with much greater probability, locates the Council *stūpa* close to the Kūṭāgāra, or 'double-galleried *vihāra* where Buddha dwelt,' and 3 or 4 *li* east from the *stūpa* of "bows and weapons laid down", or the "*stūpa* of the 1,000 sons," as it is called by Hiuen Tsiang. The site of the Council hall was, therefore, according to the information given to the earlier pilgrim, close to the Aśoka pillar, which was probably erected there for that reason. A council or synod of some sort was doubtless really held at Vaiśālī, although the accounts which profess to give its date and the details of the proceedings are hopelessly contradictory and incredible.

"The fact that the two pilgrims were shown totally irreconcilable sites for the garden of Āmrapālī and the Council of Vaiśālī is of importance, and should be borne in mind during discussions of the

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authenticity of the sites described by them. Pious visitors to the Holy Land of Buddhism, like Christian pilgrims in Palestine, were, of course, completely at the mercy of their guides, and were obliged to accept what they were told, and they were not always told the same thing. I have proved, or believe myself to have proved, that a similar discrepancy exists between the statements of Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsiang concerning the site of Kapilavastu. The Kapilavastu of Fa-hien is represented by the ruins at Piprāvā, 9 miles from the Lumbini Garden, whereas the Kapilavastu shown to Hiuen Tsiang is represented by the walled enclosure of Tilaurā Koṭ and the surrounding ruins, distant about 15 miles from the Lumbini Garden.

"In all the three observed cases of clear discrepancy I believe that the earlier pilgrim, Fa-hien, is right; that is to say, that the genuine sites were shown to him, whereas when Hiuen Tsiang made his pilgrimage some 230 years later, the legends had been shifted to fictitious sites. I cannot add to the length of this already long essay by discussing the possible or probable causes of the shifting, and content myself with noting that Dr. Stein has recently pointed out that sacred sites can be, and often are, completely forgotten.[1] Sites, the true position of which has been forgotten, can be easily changed. Dr. Burgess also has shown how freely the Burmese priests, in their anxiety to localize sacred legends, have invented a system of fictitious geography."[2]

Thus the identity of Vaiśālī with Basāṛ is conclusively proved

(*i*) by the survival of the ancient name with only slight modifications;
(*ii*) by geographical bearings taking from Patna and other places; and
(*iii*) by topographical details as compared with the descriptions recorded by the Chinese pilgrims.

Dr. V. A. Smith now proceeds to explain the principles on which he endeavoured to determine the approximate limits of the ancient city. He says :—

"According to Jain tradition, Vaiśālī consisted of three distinct portions, Vaiśālī proper, Kuṇḍagāma, and Vāṇiyagāma, besides the Kollāga suburb. Vaiśālī proper has been sufficiently identified as being represented by Bisālgaṛh and an indeterminate portion of the other extensive ruins. The village of Baniyā (with the adjacent Chak Rāmadās) is almost certainly the representative of Vāṇiyagāma. The lands of the village contain 'extensive mounds', and some ten years ago two statues of Jain Tīrthaṁkaras, one seated, the other standing, were discovered about eight feet below the surface, and 500 yards west of the village. Vāṇiyagāma was the residence of Mahāvīra, the great prophet of the Jains, and this discovery of Jain images strongly confirms the identification suggested by the name. The hamlet of Bodhā also possesses a mound of ruins. The western boundary must run to the west of Baniyā. Bābū P. C. Mukherjī was told by a resident Brahman that the principal angles of the ancient walls were marked by images of the four-faced (*chaumukhī*) Mahādeo, and was shown one of these images buried under the embankment of a large tank, about half a mile south-east of Basāṛ. This image probably marks the eastern extremity of the line of the southern wall. The Bābū says that he found distinct traces of a rampart both to the west and north of it. Another similar image exists some four feet below the surface, near Benīpur. A third Mahādeo of the same kind is enshrined in a modern temple north-east of Baniyā, and is probably near its original position. A fourth Mahādeo

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXX (1901), p. 95.
[2] Ibid., p. 387.

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is said to have formerly stood at Dharārā at the south-west corner of the fort, but that one, of course, cannot have been on the city wall in that position. The northern portion of the city must have included the mounds of Pharāwal village, Chak Abora, where the house of Āmrapālī is located, and Chak Bisanpur. The suburb of Kollāga is probably represented by the village of Kolluā and the group of Aśoka ruins, which must have been without the walls. The boundary at the north-western corner of the city is uncertain.

"The result is a city ten miles in circuit, which agrees with the popular local estimate of five *kos*, but is somewhat smaller than Hiuen Tsiang's estimate of twelve miles, which may have included the Kollāga suburb."

In the end the learned Doctor pleads for a systematic survey and exploration of the Vaiśālī site.

II

In the *Indian Ntiquary* of 1903 (pp. 233-36) Dr. V.A. Smith wrote a short paper entitled "Tibetan Affinities of the Lichchhavis". He found similarities between the customs of the Tibetans and those of the Lichchhavis in the practice of the exposure of the dead and also in judicial procedure. And hence he came to the conclusion that the Lichchhavis, the ruling tribe or clan in the Vrijji country of which Vaiśālī was the capital, was really a Tibetan tribe which settled in the plains during the prehistoric times.

This paper aroused considerable interest among the learned men and many scholars later on wrote on the origin of the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī Cf. "The Persian Affinities of the Lichchhavis" in the *Indian Antiquary* for 1908 by Dr. Satis Chandra Vidyabhushana and also cf. Dr.K.P. Jayaswal's views on this in his *Hindu Polity* (Calcutta, 1924), pp. 179-189.

III

In *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* Vol. XII, pp. 567-568 (New York, 1921) the article on "Vaisali" has been written by Dr. V.A. Smith. Although the article is small, it very clearly indicates the significance of the place in Indian history and culture. Some important portions of the article are reproduced below for the sake of our readers :—

"The ancient city of Vaiśālī was equally sacred to the Jains and the Buddhists long ago. It is now represented unquestionably by the village named Basār or Basāṛh (not Besarh or Bāsārh as in nearly all books), situated in the Hajipur subdivision of the Muzaffarpur District of the Bihar and Orissa Province, in 25° 59′ N. and 85°8′ E.

"The site of the city occupies a space about ten miles in circuit, which includes several villages besides Basāṛh and many ruined mounds.

The identity of Vaiśālī with the group of remains associated with the village of Basāṛh is conclusively proved

(i) by the survival of the ancient name with only slight modifications;

(ii) by geographical bearings taken from Patna and other places;

(iii) by topographical details as compared with the description recorded by Hiuen Tsiang (Yuan Chwang), the Chinese pilgrim in the 7th century; and

(iv) by the finding on the spot of sealings of letters inscribed with the name Vaiśālī. The documents, which were addressed to officials and other residents, have totally disappeared. The sealings found number about 1000, of which two or three bear the name of the town. The collection

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ranges in date from about 200 B.C. to A.D. 500, and is of much interest for many reasons.

Although the site of Vaiśālī has been visited and described by three professional archæologists, Cunningham, Bloch and Spooner, their explorations, owing to limitations of opportunity, have been extremely slight and superficial, so that in reality very little is known concerning the local remains of antiquity. The area of the city seems to offer tempting possibilities for future inquiries.

No distinct local tradition of the ancient glories of the city has survived. The identity of the site has been completely forgotten by the people, and is known only to a few students of Indian antiquities. No pilgrims visit the ruins, and no considerable modern temple or shrine exists among them.

"Yet few places in India have stronger claims upon the veneration of both Jains and Buddhists. Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, commonly spoken of as the founder of the Jain church, belonged to a noble family of Vaiśālī where he was born and spent all his earlier life. After he had entered upon the ascetic career, he is said to have resided in his native town or the immediate neighbourhood for twelve rainy seasons, during which travelling was unlawful for persons of his profession. The Jain scriptures often mention Vaiśālī. The archæologists have not sought for Jain remains on the site, and nothing in their reports would lead the reader to suppose that the Basāṛh area was the birthplace of Jainism, as it is known to the moderns.

"Brāhmanical tradition ignores Vaiśālī almost completely, and no remarkable event in the history of orthodox Hinduism seems to be connected with the locality, although in the 7th century the territory of which Vaiśālī was the capital contained several scores of Hindu temples, besides hundreds of Buddhist monasteries, mostly dilapidated and deserted. The Jain establishments at that time were still numerous and remains of them must survive. Nobody has thought of even looking for them. Such attention as the site has received has been bestowed almost exclusively on efforts to trace Buddhist holy places described by Hiuen-Tsiang. The discovery of the sealings mentioned above was accidental in the first instance. The sealings establish beyond doubt the fact that during the reign of Chandragupta II (*c.* A.D. 375-413), at the time when Fa-Hien was travelling, Vaiśālī was an important place, governed by a prince of the imperial Gupta family. It was in the province of Tīra or Tārabhukti, the modern Tirhut.

"In the time of Buddha Vaiśālī was the capital of the Lichchhavis, a tribe, people, or nation, who were regarded as a section of the Vṛiji (Pali Vajji) nation. The origin and affinities of the Lichchhavis, who certainly were foreigners, afford much room for speculation. Spooner seems to suggest that they were domiciled Persians. The writer of this article believes that they were of a Mongolian race, akin to the Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples.

"Vaiśālī stood on the ancient royal road leading from Pāṭaliputra (Patna) to Nepāl, the line of which is marked by four Aśoka pillars and other notable ancient remains. The city thus was in direct communication with the imperial capital and with many places of high importance in the olden times. The distance from Patna is about 27 miles in a direction a little west of north.

"If the locality should ever be explored properly at any future time, as the site of Taxtila is being examined by Sir John Marshall, many interesting discoveries may be anticipated, and further identifications of monuments may be possible."

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HISTORICAL REMAINS AT VAIŚĀLI

Maulvi Muhammad Hamid Kuraishi, b.a.
Formerly Offg. Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Central Circle

Basarh

Rājā Biśāl kā Gaṛh

The site of *Rājā Biśāl kā Gaṛh* is believed to represent the remains of the fort or palace of Vaiśālī, the ancient capital of the Lichchhavis and especially famous in Buddhist history as the scene of the Second Buddhist Synod, and also as the place where Buddha announced his approaching *Nirvāṇā*. It is a large, brick-covered mound of oblong shape, slightly less than a mile in circumference. The longer sides run from north to south, about 1,700 feet, and the shorter ones from east to west about 800 feet, while the average height of the ruins is some 8 feet above the surrounding fields. Originally the place was surrounded by a ditch, now largely silted up and almost entirely under cultivation. General Cunningham gives the width of the ditch as 200 feet; but at present its width is not more than 125 ft. About the middle of the south side of the *gaṛh* there is a broad embankment across the ditch which, apparently, marks the site of a high road leading to the fort. The site was partially examined by General Cunningham in 1881 in the hope of finding some portions of the masonry ramparts of the fort, but no traces of any walls were disclosed. However, he discovered (1) a square copper coin cast in a mould and showing an elephant, tree and other symbols in relief and (2) an inkstand of burnt clay relieved with a large *triśūla* and bearing a short inscription reading *Srī Vidasatya* (probably the name of the owner) in Gupta characters.

In 1904, Dr. Bloch of the Archaeological Department made excavations at 8 different points on this ancient site. Some of his trenches extended over several hundred feet in each direction, and remains of masonry buildings were revealed at almost every place. Some of the walls were found only a few feet below the surface and probably belonged to the Muhammadan times. Others, which were found at a depth of about five feet, reaching generally as far down as 9 or 10 feet were looked upon by Dr. Bloch as the remains of ruined buildings seen by Yuan Chwang in the 7th century, though there was evidence (of seals, etc.) to prove that they went back to at least 300 A.D. if not to still earlier times. These remains represented the foundations of old buildings. In plan they were often very irregular and the rooms and chambers were remarkably small in size. The floors, which were to be seen in a few rooms only, were of concrete with a layer of bricks; the discovery of a large number of earthern tiles indicated that the houses must have been roofed with this material and the tops of the roofs crowned with pinnacles. All the buildings were purely secular in character and no remains of temples were found—a miniature stone figure of Gaṇeśa

[1] Being extracts from List of Ancient Monuments protected under Act VII of 1904 in the Province of Bihar and Orissa (Calcutta, 1931), pages 20-30.

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being the only religious carving brought to light. Ashes and small fragments of burnt wood were discovered on all sides showing that the place had probably been sacked and plundered in later times. The minor antiquities unearthed by Dr. Bloch included, among other things, a number of terracotta figures of inferior technique, some stone tablets relieved with floral and geometrical designs, a copper tripod, a dish of the same metal, and a few pieces of pottery. But the most interesting find made at the exavations consisted of some 720 pieces of clay bearing impressions of more than 1,100 seals. Almost all of these seals were discovered in a single small room, which was in all probability, used for the deposit of refuse, as they were found mixed up with broken pottery, bones, burnt rice, ashes and other rubbish. They were originally attached to letters or other documents and belonged some to officials and some to private persons, generally bankers, merchants and traders, many of whom were members of mercantile guilds. Moreover, they were entirely secular with the exception of one bearing the mark of a *linga* with a *triśūla* on each side, which was taken to be the sign of temple. All these seals belonged to about the 4th or 5th century A.D. and the ancient name of Tirhut, "Tīrabhukti", occurred on two of them.

But though Dr.Bloch had found a maze of walls, he had not been able to discover any traces either of the masonry ramparts of the fort or of the Royal Palace. He had not, however, gone deeper than 10 or 12 feet anywhere except in the 3 small wells which he found close to each other. It was consequently decided in 1912 that Dr. Spooner, then Superintendent of Archaeological Survey in the Eastern Circle, should carry out excavations at Basāṛh on a more extensive scale and try to solve, one way or the other, the question of the palace buildings and fort walls of Vaiśālī, and to ascertain at the same time whether or not the site could be ascribed to pre-Gupta times with certainty. Dr. Spooner started his work in the spring of 1912; and as almost all the walls exposed by the late Dr. Bloch had been removed by the villagers during the intervening years, he decided to explore the lower levels in these old trenches. A considerable area was thus cleared down to a depth of from 16 to 18 feet; but below this point the subsoil water prevented further deepening. Abundant evidence of human occupation, such as fragments of pottery, etc., was recovered "even when one thrust one's arm as far down as possible through the subsoil water in the small trial pits that were sunk here and there—all showing clearly that virgin soil had not yet been reached". It was in one of these trial pits that Dr. Spooner recovered a fragment of dressed sandstone showing that magnificent polished surface which is associated with the sculpture of Aśoka's time.

But generally speaking the lower levels were disappointing. No monumental remains of any remote antiquity were found underneath Dr. Bloch's diggings with the exception of a round well and a few walls of no apparent importance near it. Several large square bricks "of an antiquity manifestly greater than that of any of the walls exposed" and large numbers of seals and pieces of pottery were, however, discovered, a few of the seals being ascribable to about the 3rd century B. C. Seals and a few coins and some well-preserved terracottas were, indeed, the only important finds of the season's work.

Dr. Spooner also made a last attempt to find some traces of the enclosing walls of the fortress and also of the Royal Palace of ancient Vaiśālī, for which both Cunningham and Bloch had haunted in vain. But he succeeded no better than his predecessors and this third attempt to recover the ramparts of Vaiśālī was also a failure. On this point, therefore, Dr. Spooner came to the conclusion that

Plate I

Aśoka Column, locally known as *Bhīm Sen kī Lāṭhī*.

Place—Inside the house of Bābā Nārāin Dās Bairāgī, at Kolhuā, a small village situated some two miles to the north-west of Rājā Bisāl kā Gaṛh.

Date—Mauryan Period (3rd century B.C.)

Plate II

Image of Kārtikeya.

Place—Basāṛh (in a temple known as 'Hari Kaṭorā' near Rājā Bisāl kā Gaṛh).

Date—Late Pāla period or early Turkī period.

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Plate III

Tomb of Shaikh Muhammad Qāzin (1434-1495 A.D.) on the top of a stūpa mound

Place—Basāṛh (about three hundred yards to the south-west of Rājā Bisāl kā Gaṛh).

Date—The stūpa probably belongs to the Buddhist period; the oldest tomb to the end of the 15th century A.D.

Plate IV

From left to right—Images of Padmaprabhu (the Sixth Tīrthaṅkara), Siṁhanāda Avalokiteśvara and Hara-Gaurī (Mahādeva and Pārvatī).

Place—Basāṛh (in a temple known as 'Bāvanā Pokhar kā Mandir').

Date—Early Pāla period (i.e. 8th to 10th centuries A. D.).

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the only protection provided for the fortress was probably an embankment or wall composed of the sand and earth thrown out in digging the surrounding moat. Nor were any traces found of the palace. However, as Dr. Spooner's examination of the northern portion of the fort, where he believed the palace buildings were probably situated, was only a partial one and excavations were not carried down to a depth of more than 8 ft. below the surface, it is quite possible that important remains of the palace may yet be found either below Dr. Spooner's diggings or in some other portion of the site.

The most important finds made by Dr. Spooner were, as has been stated above, about 250 inscribed clay seals found in all portions of the site and at all depths from just below the surface to a depth of 18 ft. With the exception of a few official seals the collection consists of private seals bearing the names of individuals or guilds of merchants, traders and bankers. Almost every one of the seals, whether official or private, bears one or more symbols or devices besides the inscription. On official seals the design most commonly found is a figure of the goddess *Lakshmī* standing on a full-blown lotus with two elephants pouring water over her. In some cases she is attended by two dwarfish male figures with large bellies who might be taken as representations of *Kubera*, the god of riches. On the seals of the guilds of bankers *Kubera* is represented holding a curious hemispherical object in his hands or pouring gold coins out of a money bag. The seals of private individuals have a variety of devices such as a pair of human feet, a flower pot with conches, a shield, wheel, *kalaśa*, crescent, *śaṅkha*, *śvastikā*, tree etc., or some animal or bird such as a boar (probably representing the Varāhāvatāra), a peacock, bull, horse, lion and the like. A few of the more important of these seals are briefly described below:—

(1) 6 seals—4 found by Dr. Bloch (Nos. 63,89,101, and 129) and two by Dr. Spooner (Nos. 607 and 651)—bearing representations of the Persian fire-altar. Dr. Bloch's specimens are all inscribed, but the best preserved is No. 101 on which the fire-altar is very distinct and the inscription reads "*Ravidāsa*—the slave of the sun." The inscription on No. 607 of Dr. Spooner's collection reads "*Bhagvata Ādityasya*." The fire-altar is also quite distinct on this specimen. According to Dr. Spooner these seals exhibit Īrānian (Magian) influence and he thinks that seal No. 607 evidently belongs to some temple sacred to the divinity "*of the Blessed Sun*" as worshipped by Indians of Magian descent (perhaps Śākadwīpī Brahmans)—for, he argues, if it had been merely a Hindu temple to that luminary, this form of altar would not have occurred. The seals belong to the Early Gupta period.

(2) Seal No. 800. The device on this seal is a *kalaśa* with one flower, and two tiny crescents to left and right just above the shoulders of the jar. The legend, which is in 3 lines, is engraved in characters of the Mauryan period and runs as follows:—

Ve Sā lī a nu
Ṭa kā re
Saṁ yā na ka

The first and the third lines are in larger letters than is the second. Dr. Spooner therefore reads it:—"*Vesālī Anusaṁyānaka Ṭakāre*" and explains it as :—

"The Vaiśālī Patrol, Ṭakāra (outpost)".

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(3) A well-cut stone matrix which is also ascribed by Dr. Spooner to the Mauryan epoch. It bears a taurine and a private individual's name reading *Sujātarshasa*.

(4) A seal (No. 191) with an animated figure of Nrisiṁha—(*perhaps the oldest in India*)—seated on an altar with left knee bent and the right foot resting on a long stool. The inscription is damaged. Gupta.

(5) A magnificent large official seal (No. 200), belonging to the "Minister of the Crown Prince." Gupta.

(6) Seal (No. 162), bearing the figure of a *winged* lion standing to right. No legend. Only example of a winged lion.

(7) Seal No. 159. It bears an interesting representation of a hemispherical stūpa with clear indications of a railing around the base and a square box-like receptacle or railing at the top decorated with long waving streamers sweeping down to right and left. No legend.

(8) Seal No. 211, showing a human figure possibly in the act of skipping with a rope! Legend effaced. Found 3 ft. 6 ins. below surface.

(9) No. 248. A most important seal bearing as device a bull, facing, standing in the centre with the legend in a continuous circle around the edge. Professors Rapson and Venis read the legend as follows:—

"*Rājno mahākshatrapasya*
svāmi-Rudrasimhasya
duhitu Rājnō Mahākashatrapa-
sya svāmi Rudrasenasya
bhaginyā mahādevyā
Prabhudamāyā (*ḥ*)"

i.e. "(the seal) of the great Queen Prabhudamā, sister of the king, the Mahākshatrapa, svāmī Rudrasena, and daughter of the king, the Mahākshatrapa, svāmī Rudrasiṁha."

The few important finds besides the seals were (1) an admirably modelled terracotta head, (2) some terracotta plaques, one of which bears a winged human figure indicating foreign influence, and (3) a dozen copper and silver coins—three of which are apparently of the punch-marked type.

The discovery from Basāṛh of older seals and terracottas as well as of the punch-marked coins and the fragment of stone with Mauryan polish—all of which can, with more or less precision, be ascribed to about the 3rd century B.C.—is conculsive proof of the place having been in occupation during the Mauryan period. More substantial proofs would have been forthcoming had not the subsoil water prevented further deepening of the excavations below 18 feet.

The coins and almost all the terracottas and other minor antiquities recovered at Basāṛh by Dr. Spooner have now been transferred to the Patna Museum on loan from the Government of India, those discovered by Dr. Bloch having been previously deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. A list of the coins is given below:—

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Serial No.	Metal	Type	Obverse	Reverse
1	Æ	Punch-marked	Sun	Indistinct Symbol.
2	Æ	Do.	Indistinct	Do.
3	Æ	Do.	Do.	Do.
4	Æ	Cast coin (circular)	Elephant to 1	Ujjain symbol.
5	Æ	Kaniskha	King standing at altar to 1	Wind God running to 1.
6	AR	'Alāud-Dīn	..	..
7	AR	Do.	..	..
8	Æ	Ibrāhīm Shāh, Sultān	..	..
9–11	Æ	Three coins	..	..
12	AR	One coin supplied by the Collector of Muzaffarpur District	..	..

At the south-west angle of the *garh* stands a small shrine of modern construction known as the Veṅkaṭeśvara temple. It contains brass figures of Rāma Sitā, Lakshamaṇa, Parsurāma, Sūrya and Lakshmī and twelve small *sālagrāms*—all of modern date. There are several other temples outside fort area, some of them containing old images.

Ruined brick stūpa with Muhammadan tombs on the top

The mound is a solid mass of brickwork and stands 23 ft. 8 ins. high above the fields (Cunningham). The diameter at the base of the mound is about 140 ft. On the south side is a long flight of steps leading to the summit of the mound. No complete bricks are visible; but some of those used in the steps measure 2¾ ins. thick and nearly 9 ins. in width.

The top of the mound has been levelled up for the reception of Muhammadan tombs, the largest and the most important of which is known as Mīrānjī kī Dargāh, but really contains the relics of a well-known saint of this country named Shaikh Muḥammad Qāẓin. The full name of the saint was Shaikh Muḥammad Faiẓullāh Qāẓin Shuṭṭārī ibn Qāẓī 'Ulā ibn Qāẓī Ālam ibn Qāẓi Jamāluddīn ibn 'Alī ibn Sulaimān ibn Salāḥuddīn ibn Ismā'īl ibn Imām Muḥammad Faqīh. The last named was one of the earliest Muslim missionaries in India and is generally known as Tāj Faqīh among his numerous descendants. He is believed to have wrested Maner from the local Hindū chief some time about 576 A.H.=1180 A.D. and to have left three of his sons, named Isrā'īl, Ismā'īl and 'Abdul 'Azīz,' to propagate Islām in this country while he himself went back to Mecca, whence he had come and where his grave is still shown.

The eldest and the youngest brothers worked on this side of the Ganges while the second son Ismā'īl took upon himself the task of preaching the Truth in the provinces lying on the other side of the river. Of the descendants of Isrāīl, the eldest son of Imām Muḥammad Faqīh, the best known are Makhdūm Sharfuddīn Bihārī, Qāẓī Yaḥyā and Shāh Daulat Manerī; of the descendants of the

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second son, Ismā'īl, the most famous was Shaikh Qāẓin of Banyā Basāṛh; and of the descendants of the third son, 'Abdul 'Azīz, the most renowned was Sulaimān Langar-Zamīn of Kāko in the Gaya District. Shaikh Qāẓin was born at Maner on the 7th of Zil Hijja 838 A.H.=1434 A.D. and died on the 24th of Shawwāl 901 A.H.=1495 A.D. He is said to have travelled all the way to Māndū in Central India to become a disciple of Shaikh 'Abdullāh Shuṭṭārī and soon became one of his best Khalīfas. He is the grand-*pīr* of Shāh Muḥammad Ghauth, one of the greatest saints of India, who is buried at Gwalior.

Shaikh Qāẓin had several sons. The eldest, Makhdūm Shaikh Uwais, is said to have been killed by the Hindūs for attempting to build a mosque at Basāṛh—probably the same one the ruins of which are seen on the stūpa mound. Another son, named Abul Fatḥ, is buried in Tangol, near Hājīpur, on the bank of the Gaṇḍak. Dīwān Shāh 'Alī, the saint of Jandahā, was a grandson of Shaikh Qāẓin.

The tomb is surrounded by high brick walls on all sides and is approached by a long flight of steps on the south. An annual fair is held at the tomb on the 9th of the dark fortnight of *Chaitra* when thousands of people assemble to pay homage to the saint, and offerings of sweetmeats (*malīda*) are made at the shrine. As the occurrence of this fair is regulated by the solar reckoning of the Hindūs, General Cunningham concluded that the festival must have been established long before the time of the saint. This seems to be perfectly reasonable. But when the General proceeds to connect the festival with some celebration in honour of the Buddha or of one of his disciples, simply because the fair is held beside the ruined stūpa, it is difficult to agree with his views. Almost all the fairs in this part of the country are held either on the 9th of *Chaitra*, which is the birthday of Rāma, or on the 13th of *Agahan*, which was the date of his marriage with Sītā. The cult of Vaishṇavism has undoubtedly been very strong in Tirhut, and it appears that the saint, who was a Muslim missionary, used to take advantage of the annual gathering for preaching the law of Islām to the people. The fact, however, that ever since his appearance in this country the fair has been held at his residence and burial-place would indicate that he must have been a very celebrated preacher.

Two ornamental stone pillars of mediæval date were found in excavating near the foot of the mound sometime before General Cunningham's visit to the place in 1861.

To the east of the tomb are the ruins of a small mosque. About 8 *bīghas* of land are attached to the tomb.

KOLHUA

Aśoka Column, locally known as Bhīm Sen kī Laṭhi.

The pillar is situated on the southern half of a large mound some 6 or 7 feet high above the surrounding fields and measuring nearly 1,000 ft. from north to south by about 600 ft. from east to west (Cunningham). The mound is entirely under cultivation now; but it is believed to have originally formed a suburb of the ancient city of Vaiśālī the remains of which are described by Yuan Chwang as having occupied an area of 10 or 12 square miles. The pillar is a monolith of highly polished sandstone surmounted by a bell-shaped capital supporting a life-size figure of a lion facing the north. The shaft is 21 ft. 9 ins. high above the present ground level of the courtyard where it stands, but a considerable portion has sunk underground. General Cunningham excavated around it to a depth of 14 ft. below the level of the courtyard without reaching the base or even the rough unpolished portions towards the bottom of the pillar. He found, however, a few short records in shell-character

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engraved on the underground portion of the pillar, from which he concluded that at least another 4 or 5 feet still existed in the subsoil. He also found the column to be some 4 or 5 inches out of plumb and leaning westward. The shaft of the column, 36 ft. in height, tapers uniformly from a diameter of 49·8 inches at the water level to 38·7 inches at the top (Cunningham).

The cap of the pillar is of the familiar bell shape, 2 ft. 10 ins. high, surmounted by a plain abacus which serves as the pedestal of a lion, 4 ft. 6 ins. in height, seated on its hind legs with mouth half open as if snarling and with the tongue slightly protruding. Below the conventional lotus decorating the bell are a bead-and-reel design and a fine cable ornament. Above it is a heavy cable necking separating the bell from the abacus, which is quite plain and oblong in shape. The abacus is formed in two steps, the lower one being smaller than the upper, and is about a foot in height. The lion, which faces the north, is perfectly preserved, but its style is somewhat stiff and the forelegs are apparently a little too short. The edges of the shaft have chipped off at the top just below the capital. The total height of the pillar is a little more than 30 ft. above the surface of the courtyard. An octagonal masonry plinth has been recently constructed around the base of the pillar and the circumference of the shaft immediately above the plinth is exactly 12 ft.

The pillar is sometimes spoken of as the Bakrā (or Bakhrā) column, probably because it was thus described by Mr. Stephenson, who was the first to bring it to the notice of scholars in 1835. But it would be more appropriate to call it after the name of the village within whose limits it stands viz., Kolhuā, which, by the way, is suggestive of the ancient Kollāgo, a suburb of Vaiśālī connected with the birth of Mahāvīra, the founder or rather the developer, of Jainism and a contemporary of the Buddha. The village (Kolhuā), however, is not frequented by the Jains.

The line of pillars in the Champāran and Muzaffarpur districts—at Rāmpurvā, Lauriyā, Araraj, Lauriyā Nandangaṛh and Kolhuā, evidently marks the course of the ancient royal highway from Pāṭaliputra to the Nepāl valley and may have been erected for the edification of travellers along the high road. But it has also been suggested that these pillars mark the stages of the Royal journey to Nepāl which Aśoka undertook in the 21st year of his reign in order to visit some of the holy places of Buddhism.

About 50 feet to the south of the column (outside the house) is a small tank, called Rāma Kuṇḍ, which has been identified by Cunningham with the ancient *Markaṭa-hrada* or "Monkey Tank", said to have been dug by a colony of monkeys for the use of the Buddha. Dr. Bloch described the tank in 1903 as "ancient brick-faced", but the brick facing is now all covered with mud, though there is little doubt that it must have measured about 200 ft. by 125 ft.

Some 20 yards to the north of the pillar, in front of the Bairāgī Bābā's house, there is a ruined stūpa at present only 15 feet high with a diameter of about 65 ft. at the base. It is believed to have been erected by Aśoka. The bricks used in its construction measure 12 ins. by 9¼ ins. by 2½ ins. Mr. Stephenson, who visited the monuments in 1835 A.D., mentions that the centre of the stūpa was excavated (about 1805 A.D.) by a doctor who was residing at Muzaffarpur, and that nothing was found inside. On the top of the stūpa is a modern brick temple, approached by a long flight of steps on the east, enshrining a well preserved mediæval image of Buddha seated in the *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* under the Bodhi tree and wearing a high crown, necklaces and ear ornaments. It is a well known type exceedingly common among the Buddhist statues of the Pāla time in Bihār and frequently met with in the Gayā District. The relief measures 4 ft. 4ins. by 2 ft. 5 ins. including the pedestal; but

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the image is not life size as asserted by Cunningham. On both sides of Buddha's head are similar seated figures wearing crown and ornaments. Their hands, however, are held in the attitude of prayer. Below each of these smaller figures is an inscription of 2 lines containing the Buddhist creed formula, and on the pedestal of the principal image is the following inscription in Nāgarī characters.

L. 1. "......*deyadharmmo=yaṃ pravara-mahāyānayāyinaḥ karaṇika Uchhāhah*(=*Utsāhasya*) *Māṇ* (*i*) *kya-sutasya.*

L. 2. "*Yad-atra puṇyaṁ tad=bhavatv=āchary-opādhyāya-mātāpitror-ātmanaś-cha purvvaṅgamaṁ* (*kṛ*)

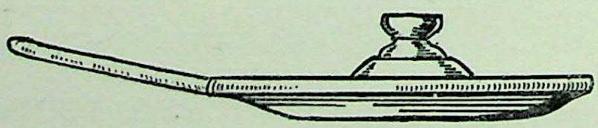
L. 3. "*tvā sakala satva-rāśer-anuttara-jñanāvāptayaiti*"

Translation

"This is the pious gift of the great follower of the Mahāyāna system called Uchhāha, (or Utsāha), the writer and the son of Māṇikya. Whatever merit there may be in it let it be for the attainment of unequalled bliss for all the sentient beings beginning with the preceptor, the priest, the parents and himself."

The statue was dug out from one of the adjoining fields north of the stūpa, where extensive brick remains exist below the surface.

There is no ancient inscription on the pillar, but General Cunningham, who excavated around it in 1860-61 right down to the water level, noticed a few short records on the shaft in the so-called shell-characters. Excavations were also made by Dr. Bloch in 1903, to ascertain if any inscription existed but nothing was found. The whole surface of the pillar is, however, disfigured up to a height of about 15 ft. with numerous rude scribblings by modern visitors most of which are either in English or in Nāgarī—some of the latter consisting of two or more lines but none apparently more than two or three hundred years old. The earliest of the English records read "G.H.Barlow, 1780" and "Reuben Burrow 1792". Rudely delineated human and animal figures and symbols such as scales, wheels, *nandipadas*, etc. are also engraved.



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SOME ISLAMIC REMAINS IN HAJIPUR SUB-DIVISION

PROF. SACHCHIDANANDA, M.A.

The sub-division of Hajipur (Muzaffarpur District), in which Vaiśālī is situated, is full of the remains of the Muslim times. As a matter of fact, this area has seen many revolutions especially in the fields of religion and politics. In the ancient time it was the centre of Jainism and Buddhism; and in the medieval times it was this area through which Islam made its headway in Tirhut. Writing in 1891 in the Calcutta Review Mr. Christian says that two-thirds of the names of the villages of Hajipur sub-division are of Islamic origin, a fact which indicates the extent of Islamic influence in the area.

In this paper we propose to give an account of the Islamic remains of the area. We shall begin from the west, i.e., from Vaiśālī (modern Basarh) and proceed towards the east, i.e., towards the town of Hajipur and its suburbs.

The only Islamic remains at Basarh, situated about 300 yards to the south-west of the famous Rājā Viśāl Kā Garh, are some Muhammadan tombs on the top of a ruined brick stūpa. The stūpa belongs to the Buddhist period and the oldest tomb to the end of the 15th century. The mound is a solid mass of brick work and stands 23′ 8″ high above the surrounding fields. The diameter at the base of the mound is about 140′. On the southern side there is a long flight of steps leading to the top of the mound. The tomb is known as Miranji Ki Dargah but contains the relics of a well-known saint of this country named Shaikh Muhammad Faizullah alias Qazin Shuttari who died in 901 A.H=1495 A.D. He was eighth in descent from Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih who was one of the earliest Muslim missionaries in India and is believed to have wrested Maner from the local Hindu chiefs some time about A. H. 576/1180 A.D. which is said to be indicated by a chronogram, viz. Din-i-Muhammad Shud Qawi. He returned to Arabia and his three sons, Israel, Ismael and Abdul Aziz were left to propagate Islam in eastern India. He died in Mecca where his grave is still shown. Shaikh Qazin was a descendant of Ismail, the uncle of Makhdum Sharfuddin, the great saint of Bihar Sharif. Of the three sons of Shaikh Qazin Shuttari, the tomb of one Makhdum Abul Fateh Hadiatullah Sarmast lies at Tangaul, near Hajipur, on the bank of the river Gandak, while that of the other Makhdum Abdur Rahman is situated at Sarayyaganj, Muzaffarpur. The third Shah Mansur Hallāj alias Makhdum Shahid died fighting with his father against the Cheroo chief of the locality at modern Baniya-Basarh. Shah Mansur was the father of the celebrated saint named Shaikh Ruknuddin who died on 18th Jamadi II, 1117 A.H.=1705 A.D. and whose tomb is situated at Jandaha in Hajipur sub-division. The spiritual guide of Shaikh Qazin was Shaikh Abdullah Shuttari

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the grand pir of Shah Muhammad Ghaus one of the greatest saints of India, one of whose devoted disciples was Emperor Humayun. An annual fair is held on the tomb of Shaikh Qazin at Basarh on the ninth of the bright fortnight of Chaitra when thousands of people assemble to pay homage to the saint and offerings of sweet-meats are made at the shrine.

On our way back from Vaiśālī we paid a visit to Lalganj and many ancient sites in Hajipur and its neighbourhood. The little town of Lalganj lies twelve miles north-west of Hajipur. It is situated on the east bank of the Gandak and is protected by the Gandak embankment. The gazetteer does not mention the mosque and the maqbara which is an old one. The three-domed mosque contains an inscription which translated runs thus:

> "In the name of God, the merciful and the compassionate. There is no God but God. This house is a place of worship of Allah the Great. In position and prestige it is higher than the skies. The date of the year is being respectfully supplied. Verily the mosque is illumined with the beauty of Muhammad." The last line of the Persian couplet gives the year 1119 A.H./ 1707 A.D.

The maqbara is a rectangular building being 9 yards square inside. There are six tombs and sub-terranean chambers are said to lie underneath. The roof of the maqbara is domed. There are plenty of cornices. Thin well baked bricks are used uniformly and the plaster at most places has left the wall. The maqbara had an iron door but this is now lost. Big open windows lie on the three sides of the wall. There is a compound outside the edifice covering an area of 51½ yards square. The Masjid which lies by its side is comparatively new and recent additions have been made in it. The custodian of the mosque ascribed the tombs to Jamal and Kamal about whose identity he could give no details.

The town of Hajipur[1] situated on the eastern bank of the Gandak was once a very important place because of its strategic position and commanding situation. It was founded by Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah Haji, an independent King of Bengal in about 1345-58 A. D. From early Hindu times a town had existed on this site and Haji Ilyas simply gave a new name to the town which was formerly known as Haripur. He is said to have strengthened the town with a large fort of which there is no sign at present except the ruins of the old rampart on high ground. Lying on the bank of the Gandak the fort was in good order in the time of Akbar when it was wrested from officers of Daud Khan, the last independent Afghan King of Bengal and Bihar.

The town of Hajipur is said to have extended upto Mahnar, sixteen miles east and to the north upto Gadai Sarai, a village four miles from Hajipore on the way to Lalganj.

Hajipur in olden days was a very flourishing town and is said to have contained in the hey-day of its glory 360 mahallas. The names of some of the mahallas can be gleaned from private papers of some of the local people or from survey reports. Andar Qila, Nakhas (market), Rambhadra, Ramchaura, Bawli, Katra, Noongola, Medni Mal, Pathan Tola, Syed Wara, Muftipore, Minapore, Khatajungi, Pokhar Tajkhan Bajkhan, Bibi Ka Rawza, Anwarpore, Daulatpore, Yusufpore,

[1] John Marshall who speaks very highly of "Sa Suja's (Shah Shuja) garden, the pleasantest place I have seen in India" situated somewhere near Sonepore or on an Island formed by the two rivers, tells us that "opposite to the garden on the other side of the river (Gandak) is Hajipur which is an ancient and ruined town, but hath been a famous place and the seate of Kings." He was the first European to visit Vaiśālī where he arrived on 30th July, 1670. He saw the pillar of Asoka as well.

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Lodipore,[1] Mirshikartoli,[2] Chisti Mahalla, Madhuban, Chowdhry Bazaar, Mandai Ibrahimganj, Kathri Toli, Chauhatta, Sonar Toli, Tangaul etc., are the names of some of the Mahallas. The town is said to have housed 1200 families of sweet-meat-sellers, nine hundred families of brick-makers and seven hundred families of betel-sellers. There were two Mahallas for bangle-makers and one for jewellers.

It is said that the sweetmeat-makers of Hajipore made such Khajulis (a kind of sweet) that hundred of them would weigh only two pounds. Another far-famed nicety of this place was its extremely fine earthen ware.[3] It is said that the preparation of clay for such fine *surahis* took one year. Without water such a *surahi* could not stand erect, such was its lightness. This industry disappeared in the early part of the 19th century. A third quality product of Hajipore was its elephant tusk mats.[4] These were very costly and the tusks had to be softened by chemicals when they were made out into tissues to weave a mat. These were regularly supplied to the various native courts. The bangle making industry of Hajipore was also famous but it is extinct now so that bangles are imported from Patna. The decline of Hajipore appears to have begun very early for Peter Mundy[5] has taken notice of it.

Just near Hajipore market lies a big garden and a large pond which are said to have covered an area of 400 and 37 bighas respectively. These were built by Taj Khan Kararani[6], a conqueror of Bengal, and are still called Taj Khan Ka Bagh and Taj Khan Ka Pokhar. Taj Khan was one of the most trusted officials of Emperor Islam Shah Sur who nominated him at his death-bed 'guardian and Wazir of his infant son Firuz', who was murdered by his maternal uncle, the infamous Adali. Taj Khan revolted and fought against him. He was defeated by Himu and fled to Bihar. Taking advantage of the confusion at the centre, he and his brother Sulaiman established themselves in South Bihar with Hajipore and Monghyr as their headquarters. Taj Khan subsequently conquered Bengal where he died and was succeeded by his brother Sulaiman Kararani. Taj Khan is said to have repaired and rebuilt the fort of Hajipore, dug a deep ditch, built many elegant edifices in what is now known as Andar Qila and laid out the big garden and the *táláb* in the area known after him. His dead body appears to have been brought from Ekdala in Bengal and buried in his favourite place Hajipore. Near the pond, on a mound about 10′ high lie the tombs of many members of his family. Close to the tombs on the mound are the ruins of a dilapidated Idgah whose foundations are laid on big blocks of stone. There is a subterranean chamber only the

[1] Lodipore is so named after Lodi, the celebrated general of Sulaiman Kararani. He was responsible for the installation of Daud Khan but his murder at the hands of Daud was one of the chief causes of the fall of the latter, and the extinction of his dynasty.

[2] So called because it was exclusively colonised by descendants and followers of Shaikh Muinuddin Chisti, the patron saint of the Moghal Emperors.

[3] John Marshal visited Hajipore on Nov. 6, 1671. He calls Minapore a mahalla of Hajipore, "the home of earthen ware." "I weighed one", he says, "which weighed but 1⅛ oz. troy and it held 18 oz. of water without breaking."

[4] The writer is indebted for this information to a very venerable old gentleman of Hajipore named M. Abdul Hakim who referred to an old manuscript and has collected the various traditions from men now dead and gone.

[5] Peter Mundy wrote in his diary dated Nov. 14, 1632........I crossed over to the river to Hajipore........Patna 4 kos and about 3 miles, further we went on sand. This place is very ancient but now decayed and in former times much resorted to as the chief place in these parts, all the traffic now reduced to Patna which has been built and inhabited of late. Hajipore was the ancient place of traffic before Patna. At the western side close to the town issues out a great river (Gandak).

[6] For Tajkhan and the Kararani Afghans of Bihar and Bengal see Dorn's History of the Afghans, Akbarnama, Tarikh-i-Lodi and Tarikh-i-Ahmad Yadgar.

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mouth of which is now visible. This is supposed to be the entrance of an under-ground tunnel leading to Patna. The mound covers an area of about eighteen kathas.

Minapore which was a flourishing quarter of Hajipore was said to have been formerly peopled by five hundred Musalmans of Syed lineage most of whom claimed descent from two brothers, Syed Qasim and Syed Muhammad. The mahalla is now bereft of Syeds. Most of these lie buried in an extensive grave yard north of the Karbala. Close to the road on the western side lies the tomb of Makhdum Qasim (son of the famous Pir Damaria whose tomb is situated across the river on the bank of the Ganges at Patna just opposite to that of his son at Hajipore) and his wife. There are no inscriptions on the tomb. To the east of the tomb can be seen the ruins of the gate of an Idgah and those of a large and imposing old mosque pierced by three arched entrances of which only two are extant. The southern part of the edifice which was surmounted by three big domes has completely disappeared. The three concentric arches built of brick which supported the two domes on the northern side are still standing giving us an idea of what the mosque must have been like at one time.

Another Mahalla of Hajipore is known as Jaruha, a corruption of Jalua, so-called because the town was burnt when Hussain Shah, King of Jaunpore, soon after his accession in 856 A.H.= 1451 A. D. and truce with Bahlol Lodi, led an expedition against Tirhut and Orissa and on the way devastated and burnt down a part of Hajipore. Jaruha is rich in historical monuments, the most remarkable of which is the Mamun Bhanja Ka Maqbara. The mausoleum is built on a raised platform with several enclosing walls. There is a flight of nine high steps from the road to the floor of the mausoleum. The second door on the staircase has a stone lintel while the jam of the third door is also built of stone. The fourth or the topmost door has got brick jam. Two walls enclose the mausoleum. The inner wall contains latticed windows, three on each side. The walls are partly dilapidated. The outer wall measures 85′4″ both ways. The main mausoleum is a square building pierced by three arch openings on all sides. The walls enclosing the tomb measure 19′ 9″ by 17′ 2″. To the north of this enclosure there is a Chirāgdān. The mausoleum contains two tombs which are ascribed to two personages, Syed Muhammad and his maternal uncle Syed Ahmad, who had died as martyrs. Tradition says that the dead bodies were discovered while a tank was being dug at the order of Raja Shiva Singh of Tirhut (early 15th century A.D.). It was at the expense of the Raja that what was once a magnificent building was erected by two Muslim sepoys who lived in disguise in his camp. The descendants of the sepoys are still alive and they are the hereditary mojawirs or custodians of the mausoleum which was badly damaged in the earthquake of 1934. They claim to have had in their possession many Firmans and Sanads[1], which, they say, were granted by Firoz Shah Tughlak, kings of Bengal, and the various Subedars of Bihar down to the days of Raja Sitab Rai. Some valuable documents are in possession of Shah Vakil Ahmad Saheb. On the four corners of the roof rise four turrets. The wall enclosing the tombs

[1] Three Sanads, the copies of which have been taken for the Patna College Historical Museum by Frof. Syed Hasan Askari, M.A., B.L., show that Shaikh Bayazid, a mojawir of Pir Mamunbhanja mausoleum was granted a Firman conferring on him 50 bighas of land free of rent in Sadullahpore Satan of pergana Haveli Hajipore and the Sanads were renewed from time to time by Nawab Jafar Khan (Murshid Quli Khan of Bengal) and such Subedars of Bihar as Daud Khan Quraishi, Lashkar Khan, Amir Khan, Saif Khan and Safi Khan. It is very regrettable to mention that the old gentleman Sheikh Nasiruddin Saheb who had at first shown these documents snatched away the remaining ones from the hands of one of us and sternly refused, despite repeated requests, to allow us to have a glance at them.

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is 2′ 2″ thick. There is also a small dome and a Kalaśa with lotus petals carved on it. Broken pieces of stones and bricks are lying in the heap in one part of the enclosure and there are also two big iron drums lying in an uncared for state. Outside the mausoleum but within the enclosure is an open mosque. Its veranda is 12 feet broad. In the walls there are nine arched recesses with niches on either side. On the two corners of the outer enclosing wall are two dome pillars showing the lotus petals on the top. Besides the Chirāgdān mentioned above, there lies a small basalt slab containing an inscription of which the first two lines are in Arabic usually found in mosques. The other lines read as follows:

> "Bana-i-Hazal Masjid al Aali Haji Chand Nawab-i-Shaista Khani. Katba-i-Muhammad Mukim-Ibn-Mir Syed Abdur Rasul, 1071 A. H." i.e., the founder of the grand mosque is Haji[1] Chand, an omrah of Nawab Shaista Khan, the scribe is Md. Mukim son of Mir Syed Abur Rasool year 1071 A.H.=1660 A.D.

On either side of the main outer gateway which appears to have been doubly arched at some distance and probably at the corner of the whole structure, there is a massive piece of brick work, the upper portion of which seems to have been a big chamber pierced by three arched openings. But the arches no longer exist. A fair is held at the mausoleum on the occasion of Mohrram each year.

A furlong across the road lies a beautiful building known as the Karbala. It lies within a big enclosure pierced by a high double storied brick built gateway with a big wooden gate bearing an inscription in Devanagari characters indicating that the wooden door was provided by a Hindu gentleman of Sarayyagunj, Muzaffarpore. There is a small gateway on the eastern side. In the centre of the enclosure there is a Karbala built on a raised platform and it is in a remarkably good state of preservation. The Karbala has got four turrets on each corner of the building. On the western side there is a big *qanati* Masjid with five arched recesses and a very big verandah. Adjacent to the mosque is a bigger and more imposing Idgah. Its verandah leads to two big halls, each of them having two small chambers on either side. The verandah and rooms are paved with large bricks.

Close to the Gandak bridge lies what is called the tomb of Haji Ilyas, the founder of Hajipore. There are three tombs on a raised and enclosed platform. One of them is said to be the tomb of Haji Ilyas while in the other two rest the custodians of the tomb. Near by across the road lies the tomb of Haji-ul-Harmain, his spiritual preceptor, a reputed disciple of Badiuddin Shah Madar.

At some distance from these tombs lies one of the most conspicuous buildings of the town known as Jama Masjid built by Mokhsus Khan,[2] a brother of Said Khan Chaghta who was twice the governor of Bihar in the time of Akbar. This mosque as the Hindi chronogram denotes was built in 995 A.H=1587 A.D. (Surpat[3] lochan tain haro Manmath bāna bichāra, San Masjid Makhsus

[1] It would be interesting to know that the mosque built by the same Haji Chand in 1056 A.H.=1641 A.D. is still extant in a dilapidated condition in Mahalla Babuaganj, Patna City.

[2] He had been granted a jagir in Bengal and was perhaps the founder of the present city of Murshidabad of which the old name was Maksusabad. He accompanied Raja Man Singh in his expedition to Orissa and took a leading part in its conquest. (Akbarnama and Maasir-ul-Umra).

[3] From 1000 (represented by a thousand eyes of King Indra) take away five (represented by the five arrows of Manmath or cupid) and the result will give the date of the mosque built by Makhsus on the bank of the Crescent river. This gives 1000-5 equal to 995 A.H.=1587 A.D.

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Ki jadi nadi par sāj). It is said that this mosque[1] had three gates[2] but only the third now remains in a dilapidated condition, while the first two have disappeared. The second one was swallowed up by the road which formerly passed further east. As regards the third gate which gives access to the enclosed compound, it must have been in its original condition a splendid structure. It has got a very large arched opening, the upper portion of which is in a very badly damaged condition. Just above the wooden doorway as also the iron beams supporting the gate structure is a square opening which was originally filled up by the stone containing the Persian inscription, now fixed up in the central outer arch of the main mosque. The slab bearing the Arabic inscription which has been thus replaced was broken into pieces. There is a big stone slab lying in the compound of the mosque giving faint indication of something originally written in Sanskrit. It is said to represent the stone bearing the Hindi inscription and fixed in original in the first of the three gates. The cornices of the existing gateway are similar to the various ornamented cornices found in the chambers of the prayer-hall of the mosque. There is also the same bracket and the drip stone. One of the pillars on the south-east corner of the main gateway has disappeared while that on the northern side exactly parallel is still extant though the upper portion of this one has tumbled down.

The front verandah of the mosque measures 89′6″ by 26′. The wall of the prayer chamber is 7′ 3″ thick. The mosque is an imposing all-stone three-domed building consisting of a big prayer hall measuring 71′ 10″ by 20′ 2″. The hall is divided into three compartments supported by vaulted arches and lateral walls. The main *mehrab* where the Imam stands has got an arched recess with a panel in front decorated with floral designs. The pulpit by the side of the central internal arch contains a small arched chamber approached by three stone steps and supported by four stone pillars. The base and capital of the two pillars on the south are decorated with floral designs. There are niches on either side of the central *mehrab* as also on the sides of the two other *mehrabs*. The pendentive has brackets and double false arches in all the chambers. There are latticed arched windows on the north and on the south giving light and air. The central arch entrance and in fact the whole structure with two pillars appears to have been a renovation. The domes on the sides are octagonal while that in the middle has twelve corners. The whole building is enclosed by a brick wall.

Quite close to the road from Jaruha to Hajipore lies the structure known as the Bawan Hazari Chabutra. Its name is explained in various ways. Some say that it was built by a noble whose income was Rs. 52000/-. Others say that it belonged to a Sardar who held *mansab* of 52000 horse (the rank did not exist at all). Still others assert that Rs. 52000-/ were spent in building the house of which only the Chabutra is extant now. All these are legends and find no corroboration in any historical texts.

Another antiquity of considerable repute is the Kauriha Kuan. It is a very old well and has got recesses inside. An inscriptional stone above the water level was unfortunately beyond our

[1] Cunningham (1871) who describes the stone mosque which measures 84′ by 33′ as 'the only building of any consequence at Hajipore' believed that it must have been built entirely of Hindu materials and apparently stands on an old Hindu site on the road leading down to Pathrighat on the Gandak opposite Sonpore. Cunningham was struck by the iron cramp holes retained in the stone and he traced the iron cramps to the old Hindu building.

[2] Mr. Christian (Calcutta Review 1891) also mentions the tradition about each of the three door ways having an inscription in different languages. But his reading of Maksud for Makhsus was wrong.

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reach and could not be studied. One of the recesses is the door of a subterranean tunnel which leads from the well to the courtyard of the big house near by. It was used by maidservants who observed so much *pardah* that they could not go out in the open to draw water from the well. When the building near the well was under construction one *cowrie* was deducted from the daily wages of the labourers and it was from the proceeds of that tithe that the well was constructed. While the building is a heap of the ruins the well still continues to quench the thirst of the people in its neighbourhood.

On the banks of the Gandak lies the famous Nepali Temple, a double storied building built by one Hira Lal about more than a century ago. Hira lal was an official of the Nepal Raj. It is a temple of Shiva and great prominence is given to phallic worship. The friezes of the walls and the woodwork carvings show some obscene and indecent figures. Besides this, there is nothing remarkable in the edifice.

Relics of minor importance are the temple of Ramchandra, Idgah, Chisti Ki Hauz, Kale Khan Ki Masjid and the tomb of Sarmast Khan Ghazi, probably an Afghan who died fighting for Shah Shuja against Aurangzeb. In short, we may say that Hajipore abounds in antiquity. It is essentially a city of Mosques and Mausoleums and as far as the latter is concerned it is the Muslim 'Mohenjo Daro,' the city of the dead.

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VAIŚĀLĪ AWAITS FURTHER EXCAVATION

Vaiśālī (modern Basāṛh in the Hajipur subdivision of Muzaffarpur district in Bihar Province) is the birthplace of Lord Mahāvira, the twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara of Jainism (traditional dates 599-527 B. C.). It was frequently visited by Lord Buddha (567-487 B. C.), the founder of Buddhism. But it is a pre-Buddhistic site. It is said to have been founded by King Viśāla of the solar dynasty. The splendour of the city is described in the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki according to which Rāma on his way to Janakapura passed one night here as the guest of the King of Vaiśālī. Later on Vaiśālī turned into a republic and became the stronghold of democratic and progressive ideas. Lord Buddha was a great admirer of the Lichchhavis of the Vaiśālī republic and their ideals and institutions. It had trade relations with distant countries. It became a part of the Maurya Empire (fourth-third centuries B. C.). The coins of Kadphises II, Kanishka and Huvishka (first-second centuries A. D.) found here prove that the Kushans had ruled over it for a considerable period. Vaiśālī rose again in the fourth century A. D. It played an important part in the foundation and consolidation of the Gupta Empire. Many coins and seals have been found here. It attracted the notice of Islam as well and contains a mausoleum of a famous Muslim saint Shah Qazin (1435-1495 A.D.), who came from Maner (Patna district) and devoted his life to the preaching of Islam in North Bihar.

The Archaeological Survey Department of the Government of India was not slow to realise its importance and systematic excavation work was done here by Dr. Bloch and Dr. Spooner in 1903-4 and 1913-14 respectively. Dr. Bloch reached the level of the early Gupta period (fourth century A.D.) and Dr. Spooner claimed to have reached the level of the Maurya period (third century B. C.). No excavation work was done after that and Vaiśālī remained neglected and ignored for the next three decades.

In recent years fresh interest in Vaiśālī antiquities has been created through the efforts of the Vaiśāli Sangha (founded on March 31, 1945). At every Vaiśālī Festival (celebrated every year since 1945) the organisers of the Vaiśālī Sangha have been emphasising the need for further excavation at Vaiśālī in the form of a resolution. As a result of this, Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler, the Director-General of Archaeology in India, paid a visit to Vaiśālī on 21st June, 1947. He was accompanied by Diwan Bahadur Radha Krishna Jalan, the Archaeological Survey Superintendent of Central Circle (Patna) and the Secretaries of the Vaiśālī Sangha (Sri Digvijaya Narayan Singh, B. A., Sri Jagannath Prasad Sah, Visharad, and Prof. Yogendra Mishra, M. A., Sahityaratna). His visit to the actual spot convinced Dr. Wheeler of the necessity of the resumption of excavation at Vaiśālī and he has written to the Vaiśālī Sangha that if the Sangha is able to collect six thousand rupees locally, the Government of India would surely resume the excavation work.

So far as excavation here is concerned, Vaiśālīhas immense possibilities for the following reasons:

1. It is a very ancient site going back to pre-Buddhistic ages. It figures very prominently in ancient literature.

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2. It has big mounds still unexcavated and awaiting excavation. These mounds are sure to give amazing results. The biggest mound is known as Rājā Viśāla Kā Garh (Fort of King Viśāla) so called after the mythical founder of the city. It must have been the palace of the Vaiśālian Kings, and later on the Parliament House (Saṁsthāgāra) of the Lichchhavi Republic also might have been here, because the Abbisheka-Pushkariṇī or Coronation Tank (modern Kharaunā Pokhar) is very close by.

3. Many sculptures especially of the Pāla times (8th to 12th centuries A. D.) have been found at the surface or while ploughing the fields or digging the earth. This is a clear proof to show that this area abounds in archaeological materials. Every year in the rainy season a good number of archaeological finds, especially small finds including coins and seals of Hindu times, comes out and flows away never to come under human possession in future. Thus a great source of knowledge is being gradually destroyed and the more delay in the resumption of excavation work, the more harmful it is to the cause of knowledge, especially of Indology. Vaiśālī made a distinct contribution to art and iconography and this contribution must be preserved.

4. Excavation work was done here in 1903-4 and 1913-14 and many things were found. The area taken up for excavation was not even one-twelfth of the big mound known as Rājā Viśāla Kā Garh. If the whole area is dug out, fresh light will be thrown at many aspects of ancient Indian history. As it had brisk trade and commerce with other countries good materials may be found out touching this aspect as well.

The Vaiśālī area, which awaits further excavation at the hands of the Archaeological Survey Department of the Government of India, is an extensive one. The very name Vaiśālī (i.e., Expanded City) shows that the ancient city included great suburban areas on all its sides. Excavation here in the past have yielded fruitful results and there is ample reason to believe that further excavations will yield still better results.

J. C. M.
Y. M.

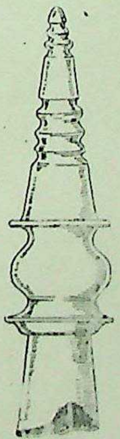

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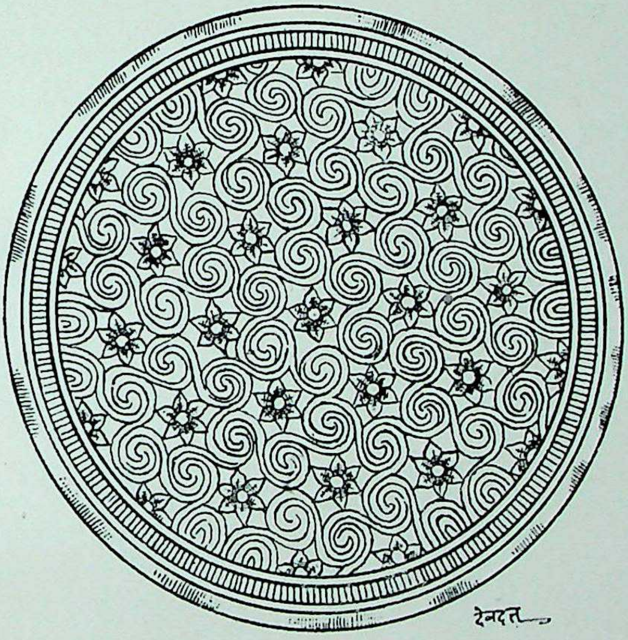
Plate V



Full size

Stone tablet with spiral ornament.

Find-Place—Basāṛh.

Date—Not later than the Gupta time (*i.e.* 4th-5th centuries A.D.)

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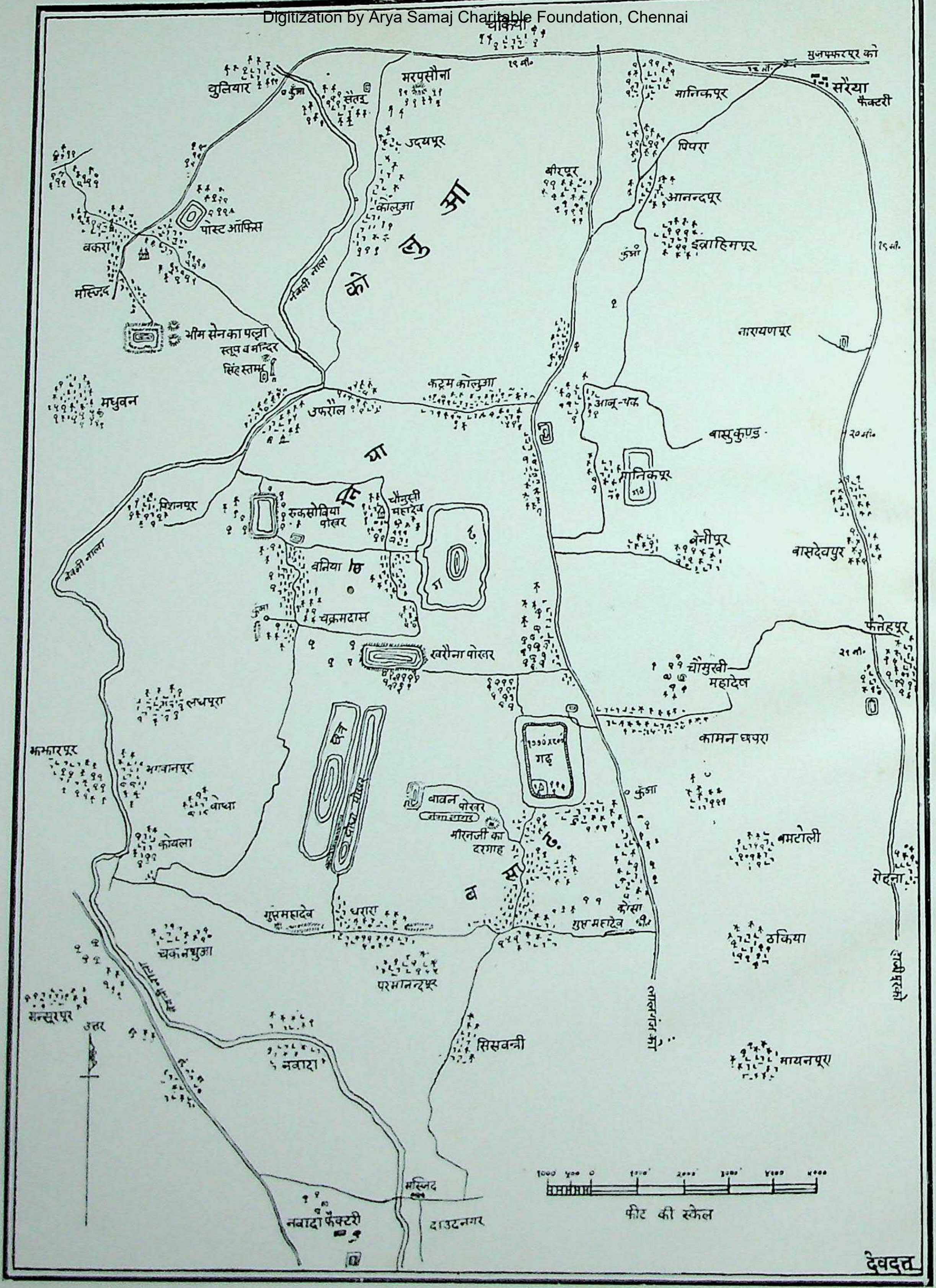

वैशाली और निकटवर्ती ग्रामों का मानचित्र

[भारतीय पुरातत्त्व-विभाग की वार्षिक रिपोर्ट, १९०३-४ में दिये गये मानचित्र के आधार पर]

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APPENDIX I

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY SRI MADHAO SHRIHARI ANEY, THE GOVERNOR OF BIHAR, AT THE FOURTH VAIŚĀLĪ FESTIVAL AT VAIŚĀLĪ ON APRIL 21, 1948

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॥ श्रो ॥

नित्यानुभूतनिजलाभनिवृत्ततृष्णः
श्रेयस्यतद्रचनया चिरसुप्तबुद्धेः ।
लोकस्य यः करुणयाभयमात्मलोक--
माख्यान्नमो भगवते ऋषभाय तस्मै ॥

श्रीमद्भागवत ५.६.१९ ।

Brothers and Sisters,

I sincerely thank you for asking me to inaugurate the fourth session of the Vaiśālī Sammelan that is being convened under the auspices of the Vaiśālī Sangha. I wish to express my great satisfaction at your success in getting Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayan, a scholar of Pali and Prakrit languages of international reputation, to preside over it.

It is very appropriate that the annual session of Vaiśālı Sammelan should be held at Vaiśālī simultaneously with the celebration of the anniversary of Bhagavan Vardhamana Mahavira, the last of the Jain Tirthankaras, and, according to some scholars, the founder of Jainism. The orthodox school of Jains does not admit that Bhagavan Mahavira is the founder of that religion. "They claim for their religion a far more venerable antiquity: they tell us that before Mahavira there lived not less than 23 tirthankaras or prophets who, appearing at stated intervals, preached the only true religion for the salvation of the world."

I feel greatly delighted that the acceptance of your invitation to inaugurate the Conference gives me an opportunity to pay my tribute of worship to Bhagavan Mahavira, one of the greatest religious thinkers and prophets of Bharatavarsha.

Vaiśālī Sangha has one of its objects in celebrating once a year the Vaiśālī festival "to recapture the glory and the spirit of joy that marked the life of the Vaiśālian people" in the past. At present, however, Vaiśāli is merely a deserted place, where, on the surface, you see no evidence of its greatness, grandeur or glory, to which frequent reference is made in the ancient works of Hindus, Jains and Buddhists, as well as in the accounts of travels of certain travellers from China and other countries. Its glorious past lies buried in the earth. I need not apologise to you for giving below a somewhat long quotation from *Buddhist India* of Dr. T. W. Rhys Davids:—

"This (i.e. Vesāli) was the capital of the Lichchhavi clan, already closely related by marriage to the kings of Magadha, and the ancestors of the kings of Nepal, of the Mauryas, and of the dynasty of the Guptas. It was the headquarters of the powerful Vajjian confederacy, afterwards defeated, but not broken up, by Ajātasattu. It was the only great city in all the territories of the free clans who formed so important a factor in the social and political life of the sixth century B.C. It must have been a great and flourishing place."

One of the most remarkable things which will strike the students of histroy, and particularly of the constitutional history of India, is the juxtaposition of big empires and small republics in this part of India. The Lichchhavi republic, of which Vaiśālī was the capital, was one of the many clan republics referred to by name in the oldest Pali records. The Sakiyas, the Bulis, the Kalamas, the

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Bhaggas, the Koliyas, the Mallas of Pava, the Mallas of Kusinara, the Moriyas, and the Lichchhavis occupied in the 6th century B.C. the whole country east of Kosala between the mountains and the Ganges. All these were republics.

The administrative and judicial business of the clan was carried out in public assembly, at which young and old were alike present, in their common Mote Hall (*santhāgāra*). A single chief—how, and for what period chosen, we do not know—was elected as office-holder, presiding over the sessions, and, if no sessions were sitting, over the State. He bore the title of *rāja*, which must have meant something like the Roman consul, or the Greek archon. We hear nowhere of such a triumvirate as bore corresponding office among the Lichchhavis, nor of such acts of kingly sovereignty as are ascribed to the real kings mentioned above.

This gives a brief description of the political form of government which existed in these republican states.

It is also true that in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C. political conditions were going through a great revolution. Some of the big independent monarchical states in the neighbourhood of these republics were aspiring to expand into empires. Ajatasatru murdered his father and ascended the throne of Magadha. He carried on a war with the aged king of Kosala. We also read that Ajatasatru conquered the country inhabited by the Lichchhavis and occupied Vaiśālī. After that conquest Vaiśālī ceased to be a republic and the whole region between the Ganges and the Himalayas became subject, more or less directly, to the suzerainty of Magadha.

It is well-known and now admitted on all hands that the two great religious prophets, Bhagavan Buddha and Bhagavan Vardhamana Mahavira, had lived at a time when Bimbisara and Ajatasatru ruled in Magadha. The date for the death of Bhagavan Gautama Buddha, according to Dr. Vincent A. Smith, is 487 B.C. Similarly scholars have accepted 527 B.C. as the most commonly quoted date for the death of Mahavira. A section of scholars, however, regards 488 B. C. as the date of Mahavira's death.

It is necessary to ascertain the social, political and economic conditions of the people in order to correctly appreciate the teachings of these prophets. Republics were gradually crumbling and empires were being founded. Vardhamana Mahavira was related to Ajatasatru who was a parricide. Greed for power blinded the Kshatriyas, and no sin was considered too great by them in their attempt to get it. The quiet life, which the ordinary people of the republican clans enjoyed under their autonomous states, was being completely disturbed. It was a period when those who happened to be in charge of the affairs of the states began to lose their faith in the values of eternal principles of religion, and the example of these leaders was probably becoming infectious, and even the ordinary people looked at possession of worldly riches and powers as a worthy end to be achieved in utter disregard of means. No society or community can hope to make any progress if these eternal principles cease to exercise any influence on their activities and transactions.

It was at such a critical time in the history of our nation that two great teachers of humanity, Bhagavan Gautama Buddha and Bhagavan Vardhamana Mahavira, came forward to preach their message of peace, love and kindness to all.

Both of them had made great penance and gone through courses of discipline. Both of them got the enlightenment and carried on their work to awaken in the people a true sense of brotherhood and a genuine desire to go by the path of righteousness.

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Mahavira spent in self-penance and meditation twelve years, and in the thirteenth year he at last attained supreme knowledge and final deliverance from the bonds of pleasure and pain. He was then 42 years of age. There is a graphic and detailed description of this important event in the life of Mahavira given in the Acharanga Sutra which, I believe, every Jain must be knowing. He attained it on *Vaisakha sudi dasami*. It happened in the field of the householder Samaga outside the town of Jṛimbhakagrāma on the northern bank of the Ṛijupālikā. When he attained Kevala, he was in a squatting position with joined heels, exposing himself to the heat of the sun, with knees high and the head low in deep meditation. His Kevala is described as the complete and full, the unobstructed, unimpeded, infinite and supreme best knowledge and intuition. When the Venerable had become an Arhat and Jain, he was a Kevalin. Omniscient and comprehending all objects, he knew all conditions of the world, of Gods, men and demons, whence they come and whence they go, whether they are born as men or animals or become Gods or hell-beings; their food, drink, doings, desires and the thoughts of their minds. He saw and knew all conditions in the whole world of all living beings.

I think everyone will admit that this equipment is necessary to become a prophet or a Jagad-Guru.

Many people do not realise the significance of the great work done by teachers like Mahavira in raising the moral level of mankind and preventing it from being completely lost.

The voice of these saints rises above the din and noise of the vulgar and points out to men the dangers of the path they are pursuing. This warning is much needed and we in Bharatavarsha believe that the Creator does send us this warning and send us a helping hand to get out of the mire, whenever the righteous are oppressed and the unrighteous are rewarded.

The city of Vaiśālī plays an important part in the great effort which Mahavira made. Hence its importance in the cultural history of India is very great.

Scholars carried on their researches for several decades and are now unanimous in identifying this present site with Vaiśālī.

Just outside Vaiśālī lay the suburb Kuṇḍagrāma—probably surviving in the modern village of Basukuṇḍa. Siddhārtha was living here. He was married to Triśalā, sister of Cheṭaka, the Lichchhavi Republican President. Mahavira or Vardhamana was born to them at this place.

Buddhist Jātakas give some interesting details about Vaiśālī. It is described as a city with three walls, each of them a *gāvuta*, a cow's call, distant from the next and it is said that 7707 Rajas were living inside the city and they received their consecration in a sacred pool of water. There were many shrines of pre-Buddhistic worship in and around the city, and the discovery and excavation of the site is most desirable.

Professor Rhys Davids bitterly complains of the inadequate efforts hitherto made by the Archaeological Department in this matter. He says: "The same may indeed be said of all these ancient cities. Not one of them has been properly excavated. The archaeology of India is, at present, an almost unworked field."

Let us all hope that this state of things will change hereafter inasmuch as those who are administering the country are greatly alive to the importance and necessity of this kind of work in the interests of Indian history and proper understanding of Indian culture.

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I appreciate most heartily the efforts that are being made by the Vaiśālī Sangha in this direction. It is a patriotic work which deserves to be liberally patronised by all millionaires and I feel that ere long they will be able to successfully carry out the programme which is laid down by this Sangha in defining its aims and objects.

I thank you once more before I resume my seat.

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APPENDIX II

THE VAIŚĀLĪ SANGHA AND THE VAIŚĀLĪ FESTIVAL

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I

THE VAIŚĀLĪ SANGHA

The Vaiśālī Sangha came into being in the first Vaiśālī festival on March 31, 1945 with a view to bring into light and prominence the ruins of Vaiśālī and to redeem it from the neglect in which it lay for decades, and secondly to stimulate a new cultural and social awareness among the village people in general and the inhabitants of Vaiśālī in particular and thus to initiate a movement for a culture of the people drawing its inspiration from the democratic ideals of Vaiśālī. In pursuance of these objects the following steps have been taken by the Sangha during the last three years (1945-48):—

(1) Trial excavations at one or two places have been undertaken, an interesting digging having been done at the basement of a Chaumukhi Mahadeva at Kamman Chhapra near village Basukund. The Archaeological Department of the Government of India was contacted and Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler, the then Director-General, was persuaded to visit the Vaiśālī area on June 21, 1947 with a view to examine the possibilities of resuming excavations. As the Government of India may not be able to take up the excavation, the Sangha is contemplating to undertake small excavations initially, in near future.

(2) Intensive propaganda was carried on among the Jains with a view to persuade them to recognise Vaiśālī as the birthplace of Lord Mahavira as already accepted by scholars. Pamphlets and brochures were published and circulated. At long last, during the fourth Vaiśālī festival, held on April 21, 1948, a number of important Jains from Calcutta, Patan (Gujarat), Delhi, Patna and Bihar Sharif gathered at Vaiśālī and celebrated the birth-day of Lord Mahavira. This is a very significant achievement of the Sangha.

(3) A small museum of Vaiśālī antiquities, of which the nucleus is a small collection made earlier by a local gentleman, has been started. At present most of the articles consist of surface-finds; but even these are extremely interesting and were highly spoken of by scholars in the Indian History Congress (Patna Session, December 1946) on which occasion the Vaiśālī antiquities were exhibited there. It is proposed to expand this museum with the progress of excavations.

(4) The Sangha has been responsible for three publications on Vaiśālī; the first, a compilation of articles and information regarding Vaiśālī in Hindi published in March, 1945, the second a pamphlet on Vaiśālī, the birth-place of Mahavira, brought out in November, 1947, and the third is a symposium known as 'Homage to Vaiśālī' ('वैशाली-अभिनन्दन-ग्रन्थ'). It is proposed to publish further historical studies in the shape of regional histories of North Bihar and Tirhut.

(5) Every year the Sangha has been holding a Vaiśālī festival of which the details are given elsewhere.

(6) A High School, a library and a charitable dispensary have been started at Vaiśālī and a very successful "Better Villages" contest has also been initiated.

(7) The Sangha has been giving scholarships and stipends to young men from the Vaiśālī area

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for training in museum work, arts, crafts and cottage industries at Patna.

(8) A Village Self-Government System under the auspices of the Gaṇa Sabhā has been organised. This village committee has taken up the work of rural development and the improvement of agriculture in that area.

These modest achievements touch only a fringe of the programme of the Sangha. Numerous difficulties resulting from the general apathy of the people towards cultural and social matters and the terrible events which have shaken the country during the last three years have made progress hardly smooth. But in some ways the Sangha has achieved remarkable success by making the memories of a great civilisation as the rallying point for a new awakening among the people.

RULES AND CONSTITUTION OF THE VAIŚĀLĪ SANGHA

(Founded on March 31, 1945)

Name

1. The name of the institution shall be 'The Vaiśālī Sangha', hereinafter called the 'Sangha.'

Objects

2. The objects of the Sangha shall be as follows:—

(*a*) To arouse public interest in the ancient history and culture of Vaiśālī and the democratic ideals it represented;

(*b*) To press for the excavation of the archaeological sites at and near about Vaiśālī and to assist in their preservation;

(*c*) To run a museum of the Vaiśālī antiquities;

(*d*) (*i*) To undertake, promote, encourage and foster research and investigation on the history and culture of Vaiśālī and other ancient places of Bihar;

(*ii*) To arrange papers, lectures, conferences and discussions on the history and culture of Vaiśālī and other ancient places;

(*e*) To raise a well-equipped collection of books and references on Vaiśālī;

(*f*) To establish and maintain a library and reading room for the public of Vaiśālī;

(*g*) To assist in running a school at Vaiśālī on the lines of Basic Education with special emphasis on art, handicraft and music;

(*h*) To organise a centre at Vaiśālī for folk art, poetry and rural drama and to collect folk songs and hold occasional gatherings of village poets, to start a village-theatre movement and to encourage research in these subjects;

(*i*) To organise a drive for better living among the villages in the Vaiśālī area and for that purpose to have sanitation contest among them, to form village welfare committees, to run a charitable dispensary and thus to aim at having a set of model villages in this part of the country;

(*j*) To publish books, pamphlets, bulletins etc. on Vaiśālian history and culture and also on subjects connected with the art, music, drama and general well-being of the village-people;

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(*k*) To provide facilities for the visitors and sight-seers to Vaiśālī and with that end in view to arrange for a Guest House and to endeavour for the improvement of roads and communications to and within the Vaiśālī area;

(*l*) To celebrate once in a year the Vaiśālī Festival with a view to recapture the glory and the spirit of joy that marked the life of the Vaiśālian people;

(*m*) To take all such steps as may be calculated to promote and to be conducive to the attainment of the objects or any one of them.

MEMBERSHIP

3. The members of the Sangha will be of the following categories:—

(*a*) Patrons will be only those persons who pay rupees one thousand or more to the Sangha in one instalment or those whose patronage will be considered inevitably necessary by at least half the members of the Samiti.

(*b*) Benefactors will be only those persons who pay rupees five hundred or above (up to rupees one thousand) in one instalment.

(*c*) Honorary members will be those persons whose services for the Sangha will be considered valuable or whose association with the Sangha owing to their eminence as scholars or cultural leaders is considered necessary. The Samiti will nominate such members by the majority of votes.

(*d*) Ordinary members will be those persons who pay an annual subscription of Rs. 12/- a year, payable on the first day of January every year which may be compounded by payment of rupees one hundred and forty-four within the course of a year, and thus they may become life-members.

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

4. (*a*) Patrons will be given places of honour in all functions connected with the Sangha. They will be entitled to get free of charges all publications of the Sangha and will be the guests of the Sangha during the Festivals.

(*b*) Benefactors will also be considered as distinguished guests of the Sangha in all functions and will also get the Sangha publications at concession rates.

(*c*) Life-members will be entitled to get the Sangha publications at concession rates during their life-time, and ordinary members for the period of their membership.

MANAGEMENT

5. The management of the affairs of the Sangha shall vest in the Parishad (General Council) which shall consist of the members of all categories, and which shall be the ultimate authority of the Sangha.

Among others, the Parishad shall have the following powers:—

(*a*) To frame rules and regulations in order to promote the aims and objects of the Sangha.

(*b*) To form a Samiti every year and to elect office-bearers by voting.

(*c*) To have general supervision over the affairs of the Sangha.

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(*d*) To delegate any of the powers to the Samiti or to any other committee framed by it.

(*e*) To amend the articles of the rules by convening a special meeting for the purpose.

(*f*) The Parishad shall have every right to remove any office-bearers of the Samiti at any time, provided the resolution be passed by two-third majority for which, if necessary, an extra-ordinary general meeting may be called.

6. The meetings of the Parishad shall be of four kinds:—

(*a*) The annual general meeting shall elect office-bearers for every year, shall consider the report of the work done during the year by the Sangha submitted by the Samiti, and shall consider such other resolutions as may be brought before it.

(*b*) Ordinary general meeting which may be held from time to time to transact ordinary business.

(*c*) Extra-ordinary general meeting which may be convened in a time of emergency by the General Secretary with the consent of the President, or on a requisition signed by not less than 20 members of the General Council. One-fifth of the members shall form the quorum of such a meeting.

(*d*) Special general meeting which may be convened whenever required for the amendment of the rules, but no change in the rules shall be passed unless at least two-thirds of the members present vote for it.

7. Quorum of the Parishad:—Fifteen members shall form the quorum of the meeting.

Office-Bearers and Their Powers

8. The office-bearers of the Sangha shall be:—

(*a*) President.

(*b*) Not less than five Vice-presidents.

(*c*) General Secretary.

(*d*) Secretaries:—Not more than three.

(*e*) Local Organiser.

(*f*) Treasurer.

President

9. The President shall

(*a*) exercise general supervision over the affairs of the Sangha,

(*b*) appoint any member of the Samiti in his own place in case of his long absence,

(*c*) cast a second vote in case of equality of votes.

Vice-presidents

10. The Vice-presidents shall exercise such powers as may be delegated to them by the President.

General Secretary

11. The General Secretary will be elected by the Parishad along with other office-bearers. He will be incharge of correspondence, accounts, management and other connected matters. With the consent of the President, he can convene an extra-ordinary general meeting of the Parishad or a meeting of the Executive Committee in the time of emergency. He will also be incharge of the Sangha office.

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Secretaries

12. The Secretaries will be elected by the Parishad along with other office-bearers. The General Secretary will authorise Secretaries to perform any of his own duties and the Secretries will in so doing act with full authority of the General Secretary.

Local Organiser

13. The Local Organiser will organise the villages lying within the Vaiśālī area in such a way that the objects of the Sangha may be attained.

Treasurer

14. The Treasurer shall

(*a*) have general supervision over the funds and finances of the Sangha,

(*b*) keep the accounts of the Sangha and place them before the Executive Committee and the General Council.

SAMITI

(*Executive Committee*)

15. The day-to-day managements of the affairs of the Sangha shall be entrusted to the Samiti (Executive Committee), which will be its actual Governing Body under the general supervision of the Parishad, and it shall consist of all the office-bearers and such other members as may be elected by the Parishad. The number of the members of the Samiti will range from thirty to forty. It will take all steps for the fulfilment of the aims and objects of the Sangha.

16. The General Secretary may call an urgent meeting of the Committee in case of some abnormal necessity.

17. The quorum of the Samiti shall be five. There will be no question of quorum in a postponed meeting.

18. Ordinarily seven days' notice of the meeting shall be given, provided in case of emergency, it may be waived with the permission of the President.

GRAMA SABHA

(*Village Committee*)

19. Each village within the Vaiśālī area will have its Grāma Sabhā (Village Committee). Its main task will be to carry out the sanitation and better living programme of the Sangha in the village for which it may have its own separate fund.

20. The Grāma Sabhā will work with the help of the Local Organiser. It will be entitled to send one or more representatives to the Gaṇa Sabhā (Local Central Committee) at Vaiśālī.

GANA SABHA

(*Local Central Committee*)

21. A Gaṇa Sabhā will be formed at Vaiśālī by the representatives of the Grāma Sabhās. Its main function will be to supervise the work of the Grāma Sabhās and to manage the Dispensary, the Public Library and other local institutions. It will serve as a liaison body between the local villagers and the Samiti. This will meet at least once every month. Its Secretary will

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be elected. The Gaṇa Sabhā will be entitled to send one or more representatives to the Samiti. The number of such representatives shall be fixed by the Parishad.

Ownership of Immovable Properties

22. All immovable property meant for the Sangha shall be vested in a Trust consisting of Sri M. P. N. Singh, Sri Dip Narayan Singh, Sri J. C. Mathur, Sri Digvijay Narayan Singh and Sri Rameshwar Prasad Singh. The Trust may ordinarily delegate to the Samiti the management of the properties. The Trust will have separate rules for its working.

General

23. The year of the Sangha will be from January to December.

24. Each member will be entitled to give one vote for himself. In case of equality of votes the President will cast a second vote.

25. The Samiti may, on all matters on which the above mentioned rules are silent, frame such Bye-laws as may from time to time be found necessary. Such Bye-laws unless annulled at a General Meeting of the Parishad shall have a binding effect.

26. The Samiti may from time to time appoint sub-committees for specific purposes. Rules of such sub-committees may be drawn from within or without the Sangha.

27. Grāma Sabhās and Gaṇa Sabhā will have their own rules and regulations.

28. Changes in the constitution can be effected only by the majority vote of the Parishad. Members must forward their proposals to the Samiti.

29. The accounts of the Sangha shall be maintained by the General Secretary. They shall be audited at least once a year and passed by the Samiti (Executive Committee). The auditor shall be appointed by the Samiti. The accounts must be placed before the Parishad (General Council) every year for approval.

30. The Sangha may affiliate to itself any such institutions as are of akin outlook. It may also send representatives and delegates to other cultural and educational gatherings and institutions.

The Executive Committee (Samiti) of the Vaisali Sangha for the year 1948—49

President

Hon'ble Dr. Srikrishna Sinha, Premier, Bihar.

Vice-Presidents

1. Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayan.
2. Sri Maheshvar Prasad Narayan Singh, M.L.C.
3. Sri Dip Narayan Singh, M.L.A.
4. Sri Sri Narayan Mahtha, M.C.A.
5. Diwan Bahadur Badri Narayan Singh.
6. Sri Mahesh Prasad Singh, M.L.A.
7. Sri Rameshwar Prasad Singh, M.L.A.
8. Sri Ramchandra Misra, M.A., B.L., District and Sessions Judge, Darbhanga.
9. Sri Bir Chandra Patel, M.L.A., Parliamentary Secretary, Bihar.
10. Sri Babu Sahib Bhagavan Lal Panna Lal, "Jivan Villa," Malabar Hill, Bombay.
11. Sri Seth Shanti Prasad Jain, Calcutta.

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General Secretary

Sri Jagdish Chandra Mathur, M.A., I.C.S., Collector of Gaya.

Secretaries

1. Sri Jagannath Prasad Sah, Visharad (Secretary-in-charge).
2. Sri Digvijay Narayan Singh.
3. Prof. Yogendra Mishra, M.A., Sahityaratna, Lecturer in History, Patna College.

Local Organiser

Sri Sitaram Lal 'Karṇa', B.A.

Treasurer

Sri Kamal Singh Badalia, Patna City.

Members

1. Rai Bahadur Uma Shankar Prasad, B.Sc.
2. Sri Rajeshvar Prassad Narayan Singh, M.L.A.
3. Sri Paras Nath Singh, B.A., LL.B.
4. Dr. Kali Kinkar Datta, M.A., Ph.D., P.R.S., Professor and Head of the Department of History, Patna College.
5. Sri Upendra Maharathi.
6. Curator, Patna Museum [Mr. S.A. Shere, M.A. (Alig. and Lond.), LL.B. (Alig.)].
7. Superintendent, Archaeological Survey, Central Circle, Patna (Sri K. R. Srinivasan, M. A.).
8. General Secretary, Mahabodhi Society, Sarnath, Benares.
9. General Secretary, Proposed Vaiśāli University, Muzaffarpur (Pandit Shyamnandan Mishra, M.A., B.L.).
10. Chairman, District Board, Muzaffarpur (Sri Kumar Ratneshvarinandan Singh).
11. Subdivisional Officer, Hajipur.
12. Pandit Jayanandan Jha, Chairman, Local Board, Hajipur.
13. Maulvi Muhammad Shafi Daudi.
14. Rai Bahadur Ramashankar Prasad Singh.
15. Sri Ramdhari Prasad 'Visharad.'
16. Prof. Shiva Pujan Sahay, Rajendra College, Chapra.
17. Prof. Jagannath Prasad Mishra, M.A., B.L., Chandradhari Mithila College, Darbhanga.
18. Srimati Lalita Singh, M.A.
19. Sri Suryadeva Narayan Srivastava.
20. Pandit Mathura Prasad Dikshit.
21. Sri Bhola Nath 'Vimal'.
22. Sri Nitishwar Prasad Singh.
23. Sri K. K. Singh, Jaintpur Estate.
24. Sri Pashupati Nath Mahtha.
25. Sri Dharmarakshita Bhikshu, Kusinagar.
26. Sri Bhanvar Lal Nahata, Calcutta.
27. Sri Narendra Singh Singhi, Calcutta.
28. Sri Seth Sohan Lal Karnawat, Calcutta.
29. Sri Chhote Lal Jain, Calcutta.
30. Sri Seth Mohanlal Dipchand Chaukasi, Bombay.
31. Sri Seth Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Ahmedabad.
32. Sri Meghraj Modi, Advocate, Sirohi State.
33. Sri Jawaharlal Daphtari, Benares.
34. Sri Jawaharlal Suchanti, Bihar Sharif, Dist. Patna.
35. Sri Kedar Prasad Singh, Vaiśālī.
36. Sri Ramashray Singh, Vaiśālī.
37. Dr. Vindeshwari Prasad Singh, Bania.
38. Sri Chhatthu Singh, Bania.
39. Sri Ram Kailas Prasad Singh, Chakramdas.
40. Sri Gangotri Prasad Singh, Chakramdas.

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II

THE VAIŚĀLĪ FESTIVAL

The idea of the Vaiśālī festival was first mooted towards the end of 1944 when a meeting of the important people of the Hajipur subdivision was held on the 31st of December, 1944, with a view to organise a function to commemorate the glories of Vaiśālī. The move was initiated by Mr. J.C. Mathur, I.C.S., who was Subdivisional Officer at Hajipur at that time and it was enthusiastically taken up by a large body of non-official workers all over the subdivision and the Muzaffarpur district. It has been entirely a cultural function in which both officials and non-officials have combined every year and to which the response has been overwhelming from amongst common people of the Province. The objects of the Vaiśālī festival are fully discussed in the speech of the General Secretary, delivered on the occasion of the fourth festival (April 21, 1948).

The dates and the other particulars of the various festivals held so far are as follows:—

1st Vaiśālī Festival

Held on March 31 and April 1, 1945. Presided over by Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Mr. J. C. Mathur, I. C. S., S. D. O., Hajipur and the Organising Secretary was Sri Jagannath Prasad Sah, Visharad. The festival was also addressed by Professor O.C. Gangoly under the presidentship of Justice B.P. Sinha.

2nd Vaiśālī Festival

Held on April 10, 1946. Presided over by Syt. Jayachandra Vidyalankar. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Sri Rameshwar Prasad Singh, M.L.A. and the Secretary was Sri Digvijay Narayan Singh.

3rd Vaiśālī Festival

Held on April 14, 1947. Presided over by the Hon'ble Syt. S.K.Sinha, Premier of Bihar. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Diwan Bahadur Badri Narayan Singh of Jaintpur and the Secretary of the Reception Committee was Rai Sahib R.S. Pande, M.Sc., S.D.O., Hajipur. The function was also addressed by the Hon'ble Syt. Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Finance Minister, Bihar.

4th Vaiśālī Festival

Held on April 21, 1948. Inaugurated by H. E. Sri M.S. Aney, Governor of Bihar, and presided over by Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayan. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Diwan Bahadur Badri Narayan Singh of Jaintpur and the Secretary of the Reception Committee was Syt. Shyam Sundar Sinha, M. A., S.D.O., Hajipur. The birthday of Lord Mahavira was celebrated by the Jains on this occasion for the first time.

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THE OBJECTS OF THE VAIŚĀLĪ FESTIVAL

Speech delivered on April 21, 1948 by the General Secretary at the fourth Vaiśālī Festival at Vaiśālī

Three years ago on the occasion of the first Vaiśālī festival on March 31, 1945, I had said that our main purpose in organising the festival was to revive among the common people love for social entertainment and enjoyment. Centuries of slavery seem to have rendered our people incapable of collective and social enjoyment. The community as such seems to fight shy of pure and simple entertainment. It seeks some justification for indulging in them. That is why our fairs are either for business and industrial needs or are purely religious festivals. Community dancing, sports, music etc. seem to have disappeared from our social life. In ancient Vaiśālī, popular festivals of this kind were very common and in them all the Lichchhavis used to participate. Men and women used to dance and sing in a whirlpool of gaiety and mirth. Probably in one such festival was Ambapali elected as the beauty queen of Vaiśālī. Festivities of this nature are still in vogue in some so-called backward areas of India. In some Thikanas of Jodhpur State, festivals, in which young men and women of the village select the prettiest maid of the countryside by throwing flowers and fruits on her, are common. Community dancing is the main feature of the life of the Santhals, Oraons and other aboriginal tribes.

I do not suggest that the Vaiśālī festival aims at re-introducing all such practices into the social life of the villages round about the ruins of Vaiśālī. Every age evolves its own methods of social entertainment, provided people get opportunity to do so. This opportunity has, for decades past, been denied to the common people of the Bihar villages. If we have sports and tournaments, they are confined to the towns. The cinema, the drama and, so far, even the radio, cover mainly the town population. Cultural conference and poets' gathering are organised in cities. Noble and high-sounding utterances about the improvement of the life of the village people seem to have done nothing to gladden the dull and monotonous life of the villagers. Practical difficulties in organising festivals and conferences in villages seem to have stood in the way of even great enthusiasts. I recall that before we had the first festival at Vaiśālī, similar difficulties faced us. We were almost on the point to decide to have the festival at Muzaffarpur or Hajipur, when I perceived on the faces of the representatives of the Vaiśālī villages a voiceless disappointment which seemed to declare that this was what they had expected. We therefore decided to overcome the little practical difficulties, and inspite of the inconvenience caused to the visitors and organisers, we have been trying year after year to bring a streak of life and joy every year to illumine the dull and dismal life of the village people, even though for a little while.

The cynics have often asked whether any useful purpose was being served by having sports and festivals only once a year after so much bother and preparation. Unless they are incorrigibly pessimistic, they should know that there are two ways of improving the lot of the Indian villagers. The first way is to put through such constructive schemes as panchayats, revenue reforms, better sanitation, opening libraries, schools, etc., etc. The second way is to create an infectious atmosphere of culture and social awareness which may loosen the mental ties of ignorance and conservatism and wherein our people may inhale freely the life-giving and stimulating air of

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progress and hope. The Vaiśālī Sangha aims at fulfilling the first of the two objects and the Vaiśālī Festival the second. Both activities however trace their inspiration to the glory that was Vaiśāli, her sacred and romantic memory, her ideals of republican government and of equality and fraternity.

We are passing through a period of transition which is shot with blood and tyranny. The tumult and the shouting are in the air. We are conscious that in such an atmosphere the thin voice of humanity, the call of ancient culture and the common people's joys may not be heard. But in this thin voice can be felt the rhythm of a vaster and a more gorgeous music. This is the rhythm of our newly-got liberty and awakening. Not long ago we used to harp upon the lost glories of India and her civilization in order to wipe the tears that the sorrows of slavery forced on our faces; the memory of Vaiśālī then was a painful reminder of our degeneration. But now light has come and our chains have been rent asunder. In recalling the glory of Vaiśālī no shame or sorrow assails us, for Vaiśālī is a symbol of our new freedom. Her republican institutions are the pattern for our panchayat, the valour of her youths is an inspiration to our army and the ideals of her undimmed jewels, Gautama and Mahavira, are our beacon light today.

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परिशिष्ट २

वैशाली संघ और वैशाली-महोत्सव

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१

वैशाली संघ

वैशाली संघ की स्थापना प्रथम वैशाली-महोत्सव के अवसर पर ३१ मार्च, १९४५ ई० को हुई थी। इसके दो उद्देश्य थे। पहला उद्देश्य था वैशाली के ध्वंसावशेषों को प्रकाश में लाना और इसे विस्मृति के उस गर्त में से निकालना जिसमें यह कई दशकों से पड़ी हुई थी। दूसरा उद्देश्य था साधारणतया ग्रामीण जनता में और विशेष कर वैशाली के निवासियों में एक नवीन सांस्कृतिक और सामाजिक चेतना जाग्रत करना और इस प्रकार वैशाली के लोकतान्त्रिक आदर्शों से अनुप्राणित एक जन-संस्कृति-आन्दोलन का सूत्रपात करना। इन उद्देश्यों को ध्यान में रख कर गत तीन वर्षों (१९४५-४८) में निम्नलिखित कार्य किये गये हैं :—

(१) एक-दो जगहों पर प्रयोगात्मक रूप में खुदाइयाँ हुई हैं; उदाहरणार्थ बसुकुण्ड नामक ग्राम के समीप कम्मनछपरा गाछी में स्थित चौमुखी महादेव के आधारस्थान पर एक महत्त्वपूर्ण खुदाई की गयी है। भारत सरकार के पुरातत्त्व विभाग से सम्पर्क स्थापित किया गया। फलस्वरूप उस समय के डिरेक्टर-जनरल डाक्टर आर० ई० मॉर्टिमर व्हीलर ने वैशाली में पुनः खुदाई कराने की सम्भावनाओं की परीक्षा करने के विचार से २१ जून, १९४७ को उस इलाके का निरीक्षण किया। भारत सरकार खुदाई का काम अपने हाथ में लेने में असमर्थता दिखला सकती है; अतएव संघ निकट भविष्य में प्रारम्भिक तौर पर छोटी खुदाइयाँ शुरू करने का विचार कर रहा है।

(२) जैनों में काफी प्रचार-कार्य किया गया, जिसमें वे वैशाली को भगवान् महावीर की जन्मभूमि स्वीकार कर लें जैसा बहुत पहले से विद्वान् लोग मानते आये हैं। छोटी पुस्तिकाएँ प्रकाशित कर उनका वितरण किया गया। अन्त में चतुर्थ वैशाली-महोत्सव में, जो २१ अप्रैल, १९४८ को मनाया गया था, कलकत्ता, पाटन (गुजरात), दिल्ली, पटना और बिहारशरीफ के कुछ प्रमुख जैनों ने वैशाली में सभा की और श्रीमहावीर-जन्मकल्याणक-पूजा सम्पन्न करायी। यह संघ की एक अत्यन्त महत्त्वपूर्ण सफलता है।

(३) एक स्थानीय सज्जन के द्वारा पहले से जमा की हुई कुछ चीजों के सहारे वैशाली के प्राचीन चिह्नों का एक छोटा संग्रहालय स्थापित किया गया है। अभी जितनी चीजें हैं उनमें अधिकांश धरती की सतह पर मिली थीं, किन्तु वे भी बहुत महत्त्वपूर्ण हैं और इण्डियन हिस्ट्री कांग्रेस (पटना अधिवेशन, दिसम्बर १९४६) में जब वैशाली के ये प्राचीन चिह्न प्रदर्शित किये गये थे, तब विद्वानों ने उनकी बड़ी तारीफ की थी। ज्यों-ज्यों खुदाई का काम आगे बढ़ेगा, त्यों-त्यों इस संग्रहालय (म्यूजियम) को विस्तृत करने का विचार है।

(४) अब तक संघ ने वैशाली के सम्बन्ध में तीन पुस्तकें प्रकाशित की हैं। पहली पुस्तक का नाम 'वैशाली' है। यह हिन्दी में लिखे गये वैशाली सम्बन्धी निबन्धों और ज्ञातव्य बातों का संग्रह है। इसका प्रकाशन मार्च १९४५ में हुआ था। दूसरा एक 'पैम्फलेट' (पुस्तिका) है जिसका नाम है Identification of Mahavira's Birthplace. इसमें दिखलाया गया है कि वैशाली ही भगवान् महावीर की जन्मभूमि है। यह नवम्बर १९४७ में निकाला गया था। संघ का तीसरा प्रकाशन है 'वैशाली-अभिनन्दन-ग्रन्थ' ('Homage to Vaisali'). भविष्य में उत्तर बिहार और तिरहुत के ऐतिहासिक अध्ययन प्रस्तुत करने का विचार है।

(५) प्रत्येक वर्ष संघ "वैशाली-महोत्सव" मनाता रहा है। इसका विशेष विवरण अन्यत्र दिया हुआ है।

(६) वैशाली में एक हाई स्कूल, एक पुस्तकालय और एक दातव्य औषधालय की स्थापना हुई है तथा एक अत्यन्त सफल "श्रेष्ठतरग्राम"-प्रतियोगिता का भी श्रीगणेश किया गया है।

(७) संघ ने वैशाली इलाके के नवयुवकों को पटना में संग्रहालय-कार्य, (म्यूजियम वर्क) कला-कौशल, दस्तकारी और ग्रामोद्योग की शिक्षा पाने के लिए वृत्तियाँ दी हैं।

(८) गणसभा के तत्त्वावधान में ग्राम-स्वायत्त-शासन-प्रणाली का संगठन किया गया है। इस सभा ने उस इलाके में ग्राम्य विकास और कृषि-सुधार के कामों को अपने हाथ में ले लिया है।

ये जो थोड़ी सी सफलताएँ हैं, वे संघ के कार्यक्रम के केवल एक किनारे को छूती हैं। सांस्कृतिक और सामाजिक बातों की ओर से जनसाधारण की उदासीनता और गत तीन वर्षों की देश को हिला देने वाली भयंकर घटनाएँ—इनसे पैदा हुई अनेक कठिनाइयों ने संघ को आगे बढ़ने से रोका है। किन्तु कई तरह से संघ ने, एक महान् सभ्यता की स्मृतियों को एक नवीन जन-जाग्रति का साधन बना कर, अद्भुत सफलता प्राप्त की है।

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वैशाली संघ की नियमावली

(३१ मार्च १९४५ ई० को स्थापित)

नाम

१ संस्था का नाम 'वैशाली संघ' होगा। इस नियमावली में उसके लिए आगे 'संघ' शब्द का प्रयोग किया गया है।

उद्देश्य

२ संघ के निम्नलिखित उद्देश्य होंगे :—

(क) वैशाली के प्राचीन इतिहास और संस्कृति तथा इसके द्वारा उपस्थित किये गये प्रजासत्तात्मक आदर्शों में लोकरुचि जाग्रत करना।

(ख) वैशाली और उसके समीप के पुरातत्त्व सम्बन्धी स्थानों की खुदाई के लिए उद्योग करना और उनके संरक्षण में सहायता देना।

(ग) वैशाली सम्बन्धी प्राचीन चिह्नों का एक संग्रहालय (म्यूजियम) चलाना।

(घ) [i] वैशाली और बिहार के अन्य प्राचीन स्थानों के इतिहास और संस्कृति के सम्बन्ध में अनुसन्धान करना और तत्सम्बन्धी कार्यों में योग देना।

[ii] वैशाली और अन्य प्राचीन स्थानों के इतिहास और संस्कृति के सम्बन्ध में निबन्ध-पाठ, भाषण, सम्मेलन और विवाद कराने का प्रबन्ध करना।

(ङ) वैशाली सम्बन्धी साहित्य का वृहत् संग्रह करना।

(च) वैशाली की जनता के लिए एक पुस्तकालय और वाचनालय चलाना।

(छ) वैशाली में बुनियादी तालीम के ढर्रे पर एक स्कूल चलाने में मदद देना जिसमें कला, हस्तशिल्प और संगीत पर विशेष जोर दिया जाय।

(ज) ग्रामीण कला, कविता और ग्रामीण नाटक के लिए वैशाली में एक केन्द्र स्थापित करना, ग्रामगीतों का संग्रह करना, ग्रामकवियों का सम्मेलन करना, ग्रामीण रंगमंच के आन्दोलन का सूत्रपात करना और इन विषयों में अनुसन्धान को प्रोत्साहन देना।

(झ) वैशाली इलाके के गाँवों में बेहतर जिन्दगी के लिए आन्दोलन करना और इस उद्देश्य से उनमें सफाई सम्बन्धी प्रतिद्वंद्विता कराना, ग्रामहितैषिणी सभाओं का निर्माण करना, एक दातव्य औषधालय चलाना और अन्य प्रकार से देश के इस भाग में आदर्श ग्रामों की सृष्टि करना।

(ञ) वैशाली के इतिहास और संस्कृति के सम्बन्ध में तथा ग्रामवासियों की कला, संगीत, नाटक और साधारण हित के सम्बन्ध में पुस्तक-पुस्तिकाएँ प्रकाशित करना।

(ट) वैशाली जाने वाले पर्यटकों के लिए सुविधाओं का प्रबन्ध करना और इस उद्देश्य से एक अतिथि-भवन का निर्माण कराना तथा वैशाली ले जाने वाली और वहाँ की स्थानीय सड़कों के सुधार के लिए यत्न करना।

(ठ) प्राचीन वैशालीनिवासियों के जीवन की आनन्द-भावना और गौरवशीलता के वातावरण को पुनः प्राप्त करने के ख्याल से वर्ष में एक बार वैशाली-महोत्सव मनाना।

(ड) उपर्युक्त उद्देश्य या उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति के लिए अन्य सब प्रकार से कार्य करना।

सदस्यता

३ संघ के सदस्य निम्नलिखित श्रेणियों के होंगे—

(क) वे व्यक्ति, जो एक बार संघ को एक हजार या अधिक रुपये देंगे अथवा जिनकी संरक्षकता समिति के आधे से अधिक सदस्यों द्वारा आवश्यक समझी जायगी, 'संरक्षक' होंगे।

(ख) जो व्यक्ति एक बार संघ को पाँच सौ या इससे अधिक (एक हजार तक) रुपये देंगे, वे 'सहायक' होंगे।

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(ग) संघ के प्रति जिनकी सेवाएँ मूल्यवान् समझी जायँगी अथवा विद्वान् वा सांस्कृतिक नेता होने के कारण जिनका सम्बन्ध संघ के साथ आवश्यक समझा जायगा, वे 'सम्मानित सदस्य' होंगे। ऐसे सदस्य समिति द्वारा बहुमत से चुने जायँगे।

(घ) जो व्यक्ति बारह रुपये प्रति वर्ष चन्दा देंगे, वे 'साधारण सदस्य' होंगे। यह चन्दा प्रति वर्ष पहली जनवरी को देना होगा। जो एक वर्ष के भीतर एक सौ चौवालीस रुपये देंगे, वे 'आजीवन सदस्य' समझे जायँगे।

सदस्यों के लिए विशेष सुविधाएँ

४ (क) संघ की सभी सभाओं में संरक्षकों को सम्मान के स्थान दिये जायँगे। वे संघ के सभी प्रकाशन मुफ्त पाने के अधिकारी होंगे और महोत्सवों में संघ के अतिथि रहेंगे।

(ख) सहायक भी संघ की सभी सभाओं में सम्मानित अतिथि समझे जायँगे और संघ के प्रकाशन उन्हें रियायती दामों पर मिलेंगे।

(ग) आजीवन सदस्य अपने जीवन-काल में और साधारण सदस्य अपनी सदस्यता की अवधि में संघ के प्रकाशन रियायती दामों पर पायँगे।

प्रबन्ध

५ संघ के कार्यों का प्रबन्ध परिषद् (जनरल काउंसिल) के अधीन रहेगा। सभी श्रेणियों के सदस्य इसके सदस्य होंगे और यह संघ की सर्वोच्चअधिकारपूर्ण संस्था होगी।

परिषद् के अधिकार निम्नलिखित हैं:—

(क) संघ के उद्देश्यों को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए नियम-उपनियम बनाना,

(ख) प्रत्येक वर्ष एक समिति का निर्माण करना और वोट द्वारा पदाधिकारी चुनना,

(ग) संघ के कार्यों पर निरीक्षणात्मक दृष्टि रखना,

(घ) समिति को अथवा इसके द्वारा बनायी गयी किसी कमिटी को कोई अधिकार देना,

(ङ) विशेष अधिवेशन बुलाकर नियमावली का संशोधन करना,

(च) समिति के किसी भी पदाधिकारी को किसी समय हटाने का परिषद् को अधिकार होगा यदि ऐसा प्रस्ताव दो तिहाई सदस्य इस उद्देश्य से बुलायी गयी एक विशेष सभा में उपस्थित करें।

६ परिषद् (जनरल काउंसिल) की सभाएँ चार प्रकार की होंगी—

(क) वार्षिक सभा—यह प्रत्येक वर्ष पदाधिकारियों का चुनाव करेगी, वर्ष भर में संघ द्वारा किये गये कार्य के विवरण पर—जो समिति पेश करेगी—विचार करेगी और सम्मुख आये अन्य प्रस्तावों पर विचार करेगी।

(ख) साधारण सभा—साधारण कामकाज के लिए समय-समय पर होगी।

(ग) असाधारण सभा—विशेष आवश्यकता पड़ने पर सभापति से स्वीकृति लेकर प्रधान मन्त्री बुला सकेगा अथवा यदि परिषद् (जनरल काउंसिल) के कम से कम बीस सदस्य लिखित रूप में इसकी आवश्यकता प्रकट करेंगे तो बुलायी जा सकती है। सदस्यों का पाँचवाँ भाग कोरम (सभा होने देने के लिए सदस्यों की कम से कम संख्या) होगा।

(घ) विशेष सभा—आवश्यकतानुसार नियमावली के संशोधन के लिए बुलायी जा सकेगी; किन्तु जब तक उपस्थित सदस्यों में दो तिहाई के मत (वोट) प्राप्त न होंगे, नियमों में कोई परिवर्तन न हो सकेगा।

७ परिषद् (जनरल काउंसिल) का कोरम—सभा का कोरम पन्द्रह सदस्य होंगे।

पदाधिकारी और उनके अधिकार

८ संघ के पदाधिकारी निम्नलिखित होंगे:—

(क) सभापति

(ख) उपसभापति जिनकी संख्या पाँच से कम न होगी

(ग) प्रधान मन्त्री

(घ) मन्त्री—तीन से अधिक नहीं

(ङ) स्थानीय संयोजक

(च) कोषाध्यक्ष

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सभापति

९ सभापति

(क) संघ के कार्यों पर निरीक्षणात्मक दृष्टि रखेंगे,

(ख) दीर्घ काल तक अनुपस्थिति होने पर समिति के किसी सदस्य को अपने स्थान पर नियुक्त कर सकेंगे,

(ग) वोट समाप्त होने पर अतिरिक्त वोट दे सकेंगे।

उपसभापति

१० उपसभापति उन अधिकारों का उपयोग करेंगे जो उन्हें सभापति देंगे।

प्रधान मन्त्री

११ प्रधान मन्त्री का चुनाव अन्य पदाधिकारियों के साथ होगा। पत्रव्यवहार, रुपये-पैसे का हिसाब, प्रबन्ध और अन्य सम्बद्ध बातें उसके अधीन रहेंगी। सभापति की स्वीकृति लेकर वह परिषद् की असाधारण बैठक अथवा विशेष आवश्यकता आने पर कार्यकारिणी समिति की बैठक बुला सकता है। संघ का दफ्तर भी उसी के अधीन रहेगा।

मन्त्री

१२ मन्त्री अन्य पदाधिकारियों के साथ परिषद् द्वारा चुने जायँगे। प्रधान मन्त्री मन्त्रियों को अपने किसी भी कार्य के लिए नियुक्त कर सकेगा और ऐसा करने में मन्त्री प्रधान मन्त्री के पूर्ण अधिकार के साथ कार्य करेंगे।

स्थानीय संयोजक

१३ स्थानीय संयोजक वैशाली इलाके के गाँवों का संगठन इस ढंग से करेगा, जिसमें संघ के उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति हो।

कोषाध्यक्ष

१४ कोषाध्यक्ष

(क) संघ के कोष पर निरीक्षणात्मक दृष्टि रखेगा,

(ख) संघ के रुपये-पैसे का हिसाब रखेगा और कार्यकारिणी समिति तथा परिषद् (जनरल काउंसिल) के सामने उसे पेश करेगा।

समिति (कार्यकारिणी समिति)

१५ संघ के साधारण कार्यों का प्रबन्ध समिति (एग्जिक्यूटिव कमिटी) के अधीन रहेगा। यह वस्तुतः इसकी कार्यकारिणी समिति होगी और परिषद् की देखरेख में रहेगी। इसके सदस्य सभी पदाधिकारी और अन्य व्यक्ति रहेंगे जो परिषद् द्वारा चुने जायँगे। समिति के सदस्यों की संख्या तीस से चालीस तक होगी। यह संघ के उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति के लिए सब उपाय काम में लायगी।

१६ विशेष आवश्यकता होने पर प्रधान मन्त्री समिति की विशेष बैठक बुला सकता है।

१७ समिति का कोरम पाँच होगा। एकबार स्थगित होने के बाद फिर जो सभा होगी, उसमें कोरम का सवाल नहीं रहेगा।

१८ साधारणतः सभा के लिए सात दिनों की पूर्व सूचना दी जायगी, किन्तु विशेष परिस्थिति में सभापति की स्वीकृति से इसकी आवश्यकता न होगी।

ग्राम-सभा

१९ वैशाली इलाके के प्रत्येक गाँव में एक ग्रामसभा होगी। संघ के सफाई और बेहतर जिन्दगी वाले कार्यक्रम को गाँव में कार्यान्वित करना इसका प्रधान काम होगा, जिसके लिए ग्रामसभा अपना अलग कोष रखेगी।

२० ग्रामसभा स्थानीय संयोजक की सहायता से काम करेगी। इसे वैशाली की गणसभा में एक या अधिक प्रतिनिधि भेजने का अधिकार रहेगा।

गण-सभा

२१ ग्रामसभाओं के प्रतिनिधियों की वैशाली में एक गणसभा होगी। ग्रामसभाओं के कार्य की निगरानी करना और दवाखाना, पुस्तकालय एवं अन्य स्थानीय संस्थाओं का प्रबन्ध करना इसके प्रधान काम होंगे। स्थानीय ग्रामीणों और समिति के बीच यह मिलाने वाली

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कड़ी का काम करेगी। महीने में कम से कम एक बार इसकी बैठक होगी। इसका मन्त्री चुनाव द्वारा नियुक्त होगा। गणसभा को समिति में एक या अधिक प्रतिनिधि भेजने का अधिकार होगा। इन प्रतिनिधियों की संख्या परिषद् निश्चित करेगी।

स्थावर सम्पत्ति का स्वामित्व

२२ संघ की समस्त स्थावर सम्पत्ति एक ट्रस्ट के अधीन रहेगी, जिसके सदस्य श्री महेश्वर प्रसाद नारायण सिंह, श्री दीपनारायण सिंह, श्री जगदीश चन्द्र माथुर, श्री दिग्विजय नारायण सिंह और श्री रामेश्वर प्रसाद सिंह होंगे। ट्रस्ट साधारणतः उक्त सम्पत्ति के प्रबन्ध का अधिकार समिति को दे सकता है। ट्रस्ट के अलग नियम होंगे।

साधारण

२३ संघ का वर्ष जनवरी से दिसम्बर तक होगा।

२४ प्रत्येक सदस्य को अपने लिए एक मत (वोट) देने का अधिकार रहेगा। समान मत होने पर सभापति अतिरिक्त मत (वोट) देंगे।

२५ समिति उन सभी बातों के सम्बन्ध में आवश्यक उपनियम बना सकती है, जिनके बारे में इस नियमावली में कुछ नहीं कहा गया है। ऐसे उपनियम, यदि ये परिषद् की सभा से अस्वीकृत न हो जायँ, पूरी तरह लागू होंगे।

२६ समिति खास-खास बातों के लिए समय-समय पर उपसमितियाँ नियुक्त कर सकती है। ऐसी उपसमितियों के नियम संघ द्वारा या अलग भी बन सकते हैं।

२७ ग्रामसभाएँ और गणसभा अपने अलग नियम रखेंगी।

२८ परिषद् के बहुमत द्वारा ही नियमावली में परिवर्तन हो सकेंगे। सदस्यों को अपने प्रस्ताव समिति में भेजने पड़ेंगे।

२९ संघ के रुपये-पैसे का हिसाब प्रधान मन्त्री रखेगा। साल में कम से कम एक बार उसकी जाँच होगी और समिति उसे स्वीकार करेगी। आय-व्ययनिरीक्षक की नियुक्ति समिति द्वारा होगी। प्रति वर्ष परिषद् के सम्मुख आयव्यय का ब्योरा स्वीकृति के लिए अवश्य पेश होना चाहिए।

३० संघ इसी प्रकार के उद्देश्य रखने वाली अन्य संस्थाओं को सम्बद्ध कर सकता है तथा सांस्कृतिक और शिक्षा-प्रधान सभाओं में अपने प्रतिनिधि भेज सकता है।

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१९४८–४९ के लिए वैशाली संघ की समिति

(एग्ज़िक्यूटिव कमिटी)

सभापति

माननीय डाक्टर श्रीकृष्ण सिंह, प्रधान सचिव, बिहार

उपसभापति

१ महापण्डित राहुल सांकृत्यायन
२ श्री महेश्वर प्रसाद नारायण सिंह, एम० एल० सी०
३ श्री दीप नारायण सिंह, एम० एल० ए०
४ श्री श्रीनारायण महथा, एम० सी० ए०
५ दीवान बहादुर बदरी नारायण सिंह
६ श्री महेश प्रसाद सिंह, एम० एल० ए०
७ श्री रामेश्वर प्रसाद सिंह, एम० एल० ए०
८ श्री रामचन्द्र मिश्र, डिस्ट्रिक्ट और सेशन्स जज, दरभंगा
९ श्री वीरचन्द्र पटेल, एम० एल० ए०, पार्लामेण्टरी सेक्रेटरी, बिहार
१० श्री बाबू साहब भगवानलाल पन्नालाल, "जीवन विला", मालाबार हिल, बम्बई
११ श्री सेठ शान्ति प्रसाद जैन, कलकत्ता

प्रधान मन्त्री

श्री जगदीश चन्द्र माथुर, एम० ए०, आई० सी० एस०, कलक्टर, गया

मन्त्री

१ श्री जगन्नाथ प्रसाद साह, विशारद (मंत्री-इन्चार्ज)
२ श्री दिग्विजय नारायण सिंह
३ प्रो० योगेन्द्र मिश्र, एम० ए०, साहित्यरत्न, लेक्चरर इतिहास विभाग, पटना कालेज

स्थानीय संयोजक

श्री सीताराम लाल 'कर्ण', बी० ए०

कोषाध्यक्ष

श्री कमल सिंह बदलिया, पटना सिटी

सदस्य

१ रायबहादुर उमाशंकर प्रसाद, बी० एस-सी०
२ श्री राजेश्वर प्रसाद नारायण सिंह, एम० एल० ए०
३ श्री पारसनाथ सिंह, बी० ए०, एल-एल० बी०
४ डाक्टर कालीकिंकर दत्त, एम० ए०, पी-एच० डी०, पी० आर० एस०, अध्यक्ष इतिहास विभाग, पटना कालेज
५ श्री उपेन्द्र महारथी
६ क्यूरेटर, पटना म्यूजियम (मिस्टर एस० ए० शेर, एम० ए०, एल-एल० बी०)
७ सुपरिण्टेण्डेण्ट, आर्क्योलौजिकल सर्वे, सेण्ट्रल सर्किल, पटना (श्री के० आर० श्रीनिवासन, एम० ए०)
८ प्रधान मन्त्री, महाबोधि सोसाइटी, सारनाथ, बनारस
९ प्रधान मन्त्री, प्रस्तावित वैशाली विश्वविद्यालय, मुजफ्फरपुर (पण्डित श्यामनन्दन मिश्र, एम० ए०, बी० एल०)
१० चेयरमैन, डिस्ट्रिक्ट बोर्ड, मुजफ्फरपुर (श्री कुमार रत्नेश्वरी-नन्दन सिंह)
११ सबडिविजनल अफसर, हाजीपुर
१२ पण्डित जयनन्दन झा, चेयरमैन, लोकल बोर्ड, हाजीपुर
१३ मौलवी मुहम्मद शफी दाऊदी
१४ राय बहादुर रमाशंकर प्रसाद सिंह
१५ श्री रामधारी प्रसाद 'विशारद'
१६ प्रो० शिवपूजन सहाय, राजेन्द्र कालेज, छपरा
१७ प्रो० जगन्नाथ प्रसाद मिश्र, एम० ए०, बी० एल०, चन्द्रधारी मिथिला कालेज, दरभंगा
१८ श्रीमती ललिता सिंह, एम० ए०
१९ श्री सूर्यदेव नारायण श्रीवास्तव
२० पण्डित मथुरा प्रसाद दीक्षित
२१ श्री भोलानाथ 'विमल'
२२ श्री नीतीश्वर प्रसाद सिंह
२३ श्री के० के० सिंह, जैतपुर एस्टेट
२४ श्री पशुपतिनाथ महथा
२५ श्री धर्मरक्षित भिक्षु, कुशीनगर
२६ श्री भँवर लाल नाहटा, कलकत्ता
२७ श्री नरेन्द्र सिंह सिंघी, कलकत्ता
२८ श्री सेठ सोहन लाल कणविट, कलकत्ता
२९ श्री छोटे लाल जैन, कलकत्ता
३० श्री सेठ मोहनलाल दीपचन्द चौकसी, बम्बई
३१ श्री सेठ कस्तूरभाई लालभाई, अहमदाबाद
३२ श्री मेघराज मोदी, ऐडवोकेट, सिरोही स्टेट
३३ श्री जवाहरलाल दफ्तरी, बनारस
३४ श्री जवाहरलाल सुचन्ती, बिहार शरीफ (पटना)
३५ श्री केदार प्रसाद सिंह, वैशाली
३६ श्री रामाश्रय सिंह, वैशाली
३७ डाक्टर विन्देश्वरी प्रसाद सिंह, बनिया
३८ श्री छट्ठू सिंह, बनिया
३९ श्री रामबिलास प्रसाद सिंह, चकरामदास
४० श्री गंगोत्री प्रसाद सिंह, चकरामदास

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वैशाली-महोत्सव

वैशाली-महोत्सव का विचार सबसे पहले १९४४ के अन्त में उपस्थित हुआ, जब प्राचीन वैशाली की महिमा की याद में एक उत्सव करने के उद्देश्य से ३१ दिसम्बर, १९४४ को हाजीपुर सबडिवीजन के विशिष्ट व्यक्तियों की एक सभा हुई। इस काम को शुरू किया था श्री जगदीश चन्द्र माथुर, आई० सी० एस० ने जो उस समय हाजीपुर (जिला मुजफ्फरपुर) के एस० डी० ओ० थे। समूचे सबडिवीजन और मुजफ्फरपुर जिले के बहुत से गैर-सरकारी कार्यकर्ताओं ने इस काम में बहुत ही उत्साह दिखलाया और सक्रिय सहयोग दिया। यह पूर्णतया एक सांस्कृतिक सम्मेलन रहा है, जिसमें हर साल सरकारी अफसरों और गैर-सरकारी लोगों ने मिल कर काम किया है और जिसमें प्रान्त के जनसाधारण ने पूरा योग दिया है। वैशाली-महोत्सव के क्या उद्देश्य हैं--इस पर चतुर्थ महोत्सव (२१ अप्रैल, १९४८) के अवसर पर संघ के प्रधान मन्त्री द्वारा दिये गये भाषण में पूरा प्रकाश डाला गया है।

अब तक जितने महोत्सव हुए हैं उनकी तिथियाँ और उनके सम्बन्ध की जानकारी की अन्य बातें इस प्रकार हैं :—

प्रथम वैशाली-महोत्सव

मार्च ३१ और अप्रैल १, १९४५ ई०। सभापति--डाक्टर राधाकुमुद मुकर्जी। स्वागतसमिति के अध्यक्ष--श्री जगदीश चन्द्र माथुर, आई० सी० एस०, सबडिविजनल अफसर, हाजीपुर। संगठन मन्त्री--श्री जगन्नाथ प्रसाद साह, 'विशारद'। इस अवसर पर जस्टिस भुवनेश्वर प्रसाद सिंह के सभापतित्व में प्रोफेसर ओ० सी० गांगुली का भाषण भी हुआ था।

द्वितीय वैशाली-महोत्सव

अप्रैल १०, १९४६ ई० (रामनवमी)। सभापति– श्री जयचन्द्र विद्यालंकार। स्वागतसमिति के अध्यक्ष श्री रामेश्वर प्रसाद सिंह, एम० एल० ए० और मन्त्री श्री दिग्विजय नारायण सिंह थे।

तृतीय वैशाली-महोत्सव

अप्रैल १४, १९४७ ई० (चैत्र संक्रान्ति)। सभापति--माननीय श्रीयुत श्रीकृष्ण सिंह, प्रधान सचिव, बिहार। स्वागतसमिति के अध्यक्ष--दीवान बहादुर बदरी नारायण सिंह, जैंतपुर एस्टेट। स्वागतसमिति के मन्त्री--रायसाहब रामसिंहासन पाण्डे, सबडिविजनल अफसर, हाजीपुर। इस अवसर पर बिहार के अर्थसचिव श्रीयुत अनुग्रह नारायण सिंह का भाषण भी हुआ था।

चतुर्थ वैशाली-महोत्सव

अप्रैल २१, १९४८ ई० (चैत सुदी तेरह--श्रमण भगवान् महावीर का जन्मदिवस)। इसका उद्घाटन बिहार के गवर्नर हिज एक्सेलेन्सी श्रीयुत माधव श्रीहरि अणे ने किया था। सभापति--महापण्डित राहुल सांकृत्यायन। स्वागतसमिति के अध्यक्ष--दीवान बहादुर बदरी नारायण सिंह, जैंतपुर एस्टेट। स्वागतसमिति के मन्त्री--श्रीयुत श्यामसुन्दर सिंह, सबडिविजनल अफसर, हाजीपुर। इस अवसर पर पहली बार जैनों की ओर से श्रीमहावीर-जन्मकल्याणक-पूजा हुई।

वैशाली-महोत्सव के उद्देश्य

(वैशाली में चतुर्थ वैशाली-महोत्सव के अवसर पर २१ अप्रैल १९४८ को संघ के प्रधान मन्त्री द्वारा दिया गया भाषण)

आज से तीन वर्ष पहले सन् १९४५ की ३१ मार्च को प्रथम वैशाली-महोत्सव के अवसर पर मैंने कहा था कि इस उत्सव के मनाने में हमारा मुख्य उद्देश्य यह है कि हम साधारण जनता में अपने जीवन के प्रति अनुराग पैदा कर सकें। सदियों की दासता ने हमारी जनता के बीच से सामूहिक आनन्द और मनोरंजन की भावना को तिरोहित कर दिया है। वह भावना अपने वास्तविक सांस्कृतिक रूप में प्रकट नहीं होने पाती; उसे किसी आवरण, किसी बहाने की आवश्यकता होती है। इसीलिए हमारे सभी सामूहिक उत्सवों ने या तो व्यावसायिक मेलों का रूप ले लिया है या प्रभाहीन और नीरस धार्मिक मेलों का। ऐसे उत्सव--जिनमें स्त्री और पुरुष जीवन की रंगीन रज्जुओं से बँध कर, सार्वजनिक आनन्दमय सम्मोहक समीरण के स्पर्श से विभोर होकर, खेलकूद, संगीत, अभिनय इत्यादि में अपने को खो सकें--हमारे लोक-जीवन से लुप्त हो गये हैं। प्राचीन भारतवर्ष--विशेषतः लिच्छवि जाति की ज्योतिर्मयी महानगरी वैशाली--में ऐसे ही लोकप्रिय उत्सवों

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की बहुलता थी। बौद्ध जातकों में हस्ति-उत्सव और कौमुदी-महोत्सवों का वर्णन मिलता है। कवि राजशेखर ने 'शालभंञ्जिका' नामक उत्सव का विवरण दिया है, जिसमें शालवृक्ष के पुष्पयुक्त पत्रों को तोड़ा जाता था। हमारे विद्वान् सभापति राहुलजी ने अपने मनोरंजक और अद्वितीय उपन्यास 'सिंह सेनापति' में वैशाली के उन अगणित उत्सवों का रोचक चित्र खींचा है, जिनमें प्रमुख था सब्बरत्तिवार (सारी रात तक चलने वाला उत्सव)। इसमें सभी लिच्छवि भाग लेते थे; नाना वाद्यों के संगीत और अनेक विधि के नृत्य इसमें हुआ करते थे। आमोदप्रिय लिच्छवि युवकों और ललनाओं का चिरस्मरणीय चित्र हमारे प्रान्त के सुविख्यात साहित्यिक बेनीपुरीजी ने अपने नाटक 'अम्बपाली' में भी खींचा है; उन्होंने दिखाया है कि किस भाँति इसी वैशाली में नगरी की सर्वोच्च सुन्दरी (Beauty Queen) का चुनाव करने के लिए विमुग्धकारी महोत्सव हुआ करते थे। शायद कुछ लोग इस विचित्र उत्सव के वर्णन से चौंकें। किन्तु आज भी जोधपुर रियासत के लाडनूँ नामक ठिकाने में वर्ष में एक बार ऐसा उत्सव होता है, जब गाँव की सभी युवतियाँ और युवक एकत्रित होकर फूल और फल एक दूसरे पर फेंकते हैं और जिस युवती पर सबसे अधिक पुष्पों और फलों की वर्षा होती है वह सर्वोच्चसुन्दरी घोषित की जाती है।

मेरा मतलब यह नहीं कि वैशाली-महोत्सव द्वारा इन गाँवों में हम उन प्रथाओं को फिर से स्थापित करना चाहते हैं। आमोद और मनोरंजन के लिए प्रत्येक युग और प्रदेश के अपने अपने साधन होते हैं। लेकिन हमने तो आज दिन अपने देहातों की साधारण जनता--या सर्वहारा--को इन सभी साधनों से वंचित कर रखा है। हमारे खेलकूद--Sports और Tournaments--भी होते हैं तो शहरों में ही; नाटक, सिनेमा और रेडियो शहरों के लिए; सांस्कृतिक कान्फ्रेंस और कविसम्मेलन भी होते हैं तो शहरों में ही। कहने को देहात और ग्रामीण जीवन के नाम की दुहाई तो बहुत दी जाती है; सुधार के वचन और शुष्क उपदेश तो प्रायः दिये जाते हैं; लेकिन जब किसी तरह के समारोह या उत्सव का मौका आता है तो व्यावहारिक कठिनाइयों--practical difficulties--के कारण गाँवों को छोड़ दिया जाता है। मुझे याद है, जब हम लोगों ने सबसे पहले वैशाली-महोत्सव के प्रस्ताव पर विचार किया था, तो हममें से कई लोगों ने इस देहात में उत्सव मनाने का विरोध किया और कहा कि वैशाली-महोत्सव आसानी और आराम के साथ मुजफ्फरपुर या हाजीपुर में मनाया जा सकता है। उस समय इन गाँवों के कई प्रतिनिधि वहाँ मौजूद थे। मैंने उनके चेहरों पर मूक निराशा की झलक देखी--वह निराशा जो बरसों की अवहेलना और तिरस्कार की देन है, वह निराशा जो पुकार-पुकार कर कहती थी--"हम यह जानते ही थे। हम तो इसके आदी ही हैं।" और तब मैंने निश्चय किया कि चाहे हम लोगों को कितने कष्ट उठाने पड़ें, चाहे हमारे अतिथियों को धूल फाँक-फाँक कर, धूप और प्यास सहकर, यहाँ आना पड़े, तब भी हम ग्राम्यजीवन को क्षणिक रूप से ही सही, प्रफुल्लित करने के लिए वैशाली में ही महोत्सव मनायँगे।

लेकिन मैं महोत्सव को एक क्षणिक वस्तु मानने के लिए भी तैयार नहीं। कुछ लोग पूछते हैं कि साल में एक बार इतनी तैयारियाँ करके खेलकूद और उत्सव करने से गाँवों पर भला क्या असर पड़ेगा? वे भूल जाते हैं कि ग्रामीण जीवन को उन्नत करने के दो साधन हैं--एक तो रचनात्मक योजनाओं को हाथ में लेना, जैसे--पंचायत, लगान सम्बन्धी सुधार, सिंचाई का प्रबन्ध, सफाई का इन्तजाम, पुस्तकालय, स्कूल खोलना इत्यादि इत्यादि। और दूसरा साधन है सांस्कृतिक और सामाजिक चेतना का वातावरण पैदा करना जिसमें साँस लेकर हमारे ग्रामीण भाइयों के मानसिक जीवन की ग्रन्थियाँ खुल जायँ, उन्हें विकसित जीवन की स्वस्थ और सौरभमयी हवा का अनुभव हो जाय। वैशाली संघ इनमें से पहली माँग को पूरा करने का प्रयास करता है और वैशाली-महोत्सव दूसरी को। लेकिन दोनों के मूलरूप में हम सभी को अनुप्राणित करने वाली भावना है हमारे बिहार की गौरवमयी, गणतंत्रप्रणाली के केन्द्र वैशाली की महिमा। पावन और मनोरम वृत्तियों से सुरभित धूलि हमें बार-बार उत्साहित करती रहती है कि हम इसके प्राचीन वैभव और आदर्शों को उद्भासित और चिरस्थायी करने में तत्पर रहें।

आजकल जब हम संक्रान्तियुगीन हाहाकार के शिकार हैं और हमारा देश उपद्रवों, क्रान्ति एवं लोमहर्षक घटनाओं की भयानक घाटी में से निकल रहा है, हम कहाँ तक आशा करें कि प्राचीन संस्कृति और जनमनोरंजन के नन्हें स्वर को कोई सुनेगा? लेकिन हमें इसी में एक विराट् स्वर का स्पन्दन जान पड़ता है। वह स्पन्दन है हमारे देश की नयी जाग्रति का। एक समय था जब हम अपने पुराने वैभव और सभ्यता का नाम लेते थे अपने आँसू पोंछने के लिए। वैशाली उस समय हमारी गुलामी के अँधेरे में आशा की नन्हीं ज्योति ही थी। उस समय दिनकर ने पूछा था--

"ओ भारत की भूमि वन्दिनी! ओ जंजीरोंवाली!
तेरी ही क्या कुक्षि फाड़ कर जन्मी थी वैशाली?"

लेकिन अब उजाला हो गया है। जंजीरें टुकड़े-टुकड़े हो गयी हैं। अब हम अपनी प्राचीन वैशाली की गौरवगाथा का गान करते समय सकुचायँगे नहीं, रोयँगे नहीं। अब हमसे कोई यह नहीं कह सकता कि प्राचीन सभ्यता का गुणगान करने से गुलाम देश का क्या लाभ। वैशाली नवी आजादी का प्रतीक है; उसकी प्रजातंत्र की संस्था हमारी पंचायतों की माता है; उसके युवकों का शौर्य हमारी सेना का आदर्श है और उसके जाज्वल्यमान रत्न--भगवान् बुद्ध और भगवान् महावीर--हमारे आध्यात्मिक आदर्शों के दिग्दर्शक हैं। स्वतंत्र भारतवर्ष में वैशाली के आदर्शों की पताका फहरायगी, अवश्य फहरायगी, हिम्मत के साथ; भविष्य के प्रशस्त मार्ग के पथिकों को वह आशा और ओज का वरदान देगी।

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